University of Alberta

First Nation/Provincial Education Authority Partnerships

By

Colin John Kelly

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

in

Educational Administration

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring 2000

National Library of Canada
Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Acquisitions et services bibliographiques
395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-63251-2

Canada

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Library Release Form

Name of Author:	Colin John Kelly
Title of Thesis:	First Nation/Provincial Education Authority Partnerships
Degree:	Doctor of Education
Year this Degree Granted:	2000

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly, or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial proportion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission.

Colin J. Kelly

8226 – 104 Avenue
Peace River, Alberta
T8S 1X9
Canada

January 25, 2000

Date

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *First Nation/Provincial Education Authority Partnerships* submitted by Colin John Kelly in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Administration.

Dr. F. Peters
Supervisor

Dr. S. Wilson

Dr. J. da Costa

Dr. H. Blair

Dr. K. Ward

Jan 25, 2000
Date of Approval

Dr. Jon Young
External Reader

DEDICATION

In memory of my father, Raymond James Kelly,
and for my mother, Clara Muriel Kelly (nee King),
with love and many thanks.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a model of educational partnership between First Nation communities and provincial education authorities. With First Nation self-government initiatives, new financial arrangements with the federal government, devolution of control from a centralized government to a decentralized model of self-government, and in particular, the initiative of many First Nation communities to assume full control of educational services, previously under the control of the federal government, there are many requests to Alberta Learning for services that were previously the responsibility of the federal government.

Based on the premise that if partnerships are desired and presently not existing, or existing and not effective, this thesis asks, "what is necessary for an effective partnership between First Nations and provincial educational authorities that would assist First Nations in assuming full control of their educational services while ensuring their success, and also provide a benefit to a provincial education authority?"

Data were collected from participants representing Alberta Learning, provincial school jurisdictions and First Nation education superintendents/ directors, provincial and First Nation principals/ teachers, elders and Chiefs. Data collected were examined to determine the educational issues facing First Nations, whether the provincial educational authority should be involved in a partnership and if yes, what should its role be, if other provincial educational agencies have a role to play in the delivery of educational services to First Nation

communities, the role of the federal government and the potential for the erosion of federal responsibilities if the province and First Nations develop partnerships, the educational benefits of partnerships, the expectation, visions and conditions that a first Nation would place on a partnership, and finally, who should initiate partnership discussions.

The responses received from each category of participant was examined and synthesized to develop elements necessary for effective partnerships. The elements of a partnership are those concepts, thoughts or abstractions that the participants felt were essential components for a viable, working, effective partnership between First Nations and provincial education authorities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I near the end of this thesis it is interesting, yet humbling, to reflect on the number of people who have played varying, supportive and active roles in the production of this document. As my doctoral advisor, Dr. Frank Peters provided professional advice, assistance and encouragement with a mix of scholarly pedagogy and Irish wit as only he can. Our time spent together enriched and developed a long time acquaintance into a friendship that grew to include our families. Drs. Stan Wilson and Joe da Costa, as members of my advisory committee, provided insight and constructive advice that contributed greatly to the completion of this thesis. I would recommend any of my advisory committee to perspective students. Other members of the examining committee, Drs. Heather Blair and Ken Ward, and the external examiner, Dr. Jon Young were equally as helpful and made many well thought out and reasoned suggestions that proved to be thought provoking, valuable contributions.

Other members of the Educational Policies Studies Department contributed to this study as well. Dr. Margaret Haughey's professionalism, conversation and guidance, Dr. Mike Andrews' always being available and Dr. Ted Holdaway's considerable experience are greatly appreciated. Also my friend, Dr. Joe Norris from the Department of Secondary Education was a constant sounding board and a source of inspiration.

The collegial support and advice of several Doctoral students that I had the honor to study with is really quite amazing and lends greatly to the knowledge one acquires and the stamina to continue and finish. Dr. Norman Yanitski and his interest in my work provided advice and encouragement that grew into a friendship. Dr. David van Tamelen, Dr. Rob McPhee, David Pysyk and Laurie Campbell were equally as insightful. Their support, experience and feedback contributed to the completion of the process. Discussions with these colleagues as well as others in the group lend an element to the program that cannot be duplicated in any work or classroom environment.

I wish to recognize and thank the Board of Trustees for Northland School Division No. 61 for their support and the one-year education study leave that

they generously awarded me. This afforded me the opportunity to focus my energies on study.

The interest and support of friends and family and their encouragement was greatly appreciated. My mother was always a quiet, motivating force and this continues. Thoughts and memories of my dad provide a certain inner strength. Finally, my family—my wife Sherril and my son Maxwell—their support, encouragement, patience and sacrifices were numerous and it made this process possible and all the more enjoyable and rewarding. Hey Max, it's done!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY 1

Historical Background 2

Constitutional Background 5

Legal Background 7

Financial Background 9

Organizational Background 11

Band Operated Schools 11

Federal Schools 12

Provincial Schools 12

The Master Tuition Agreement 13

The Individual Tuition Agreement 13

The Tripartite Tuition Agreement 14

The Bilateral Tuition Agreement 14

Need for the Study 14

Purpose of the Study 16

Statement of the Problem 16

Significance of the Study 17

First Nations 17

Province 18

School Jurisdictions 18

Theory 19

Definitions 19

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 23

Power and Authority 23

Power 23

Types of Power 24

Sources of Power 26

Authority 31

An Aboriginal Concept of Power 33

Abuse of Power 36

CHAPTER 3

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS 39

Partnerships 45

CHAPTER 4

METHOD 48

Data Collection Procedures 48

Specific Research Question 49

General Research Questions 49

Participants 50

The Constructivist Approach 51

Analytical Procedures 52

Pilot Study 53

Goodness Criteria 53
Credibility 54
Transferability 55
Dependability 55
Confirmability 56

Assumptions 57

Limitations of the Study 57

Delimitations 58

Ethical Considerations 58

CHAPTER 5

PROTOCOL 60

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples–Ethical Guidelines for Research 60

Draft Code of Conduct for Research Involving Humans 63

The Researcher's Perspective 67

Suggestions 69

CHAPTER 6

LEGISLATION 73

School Act and Regulations 74

Native Education Project 77

Agreements and Understandings 80

CHAPTER 7

PARTICIPANT PROFILE 87

Alberta Education 88

Superintendents/Directors 89

Teachers/Principals 91

Elders 94

Chiefs 95

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH FINDINGS 98

1. Educational Issues Facing First Nations 99
   Alberta Education Officials 99
   Superintendents/Directors of Education 102
   Teacher/Principals 104
   Elders 106
   Chiefs 107

2. Provincial Education Authority As A Partner, And Their Role 109
   Alberta Education Officials 109
   Superintendents/Directors of Education 112
   Teacher/Principals 117
   Elders 123
   Chiefs 125

3. Other Educational Agencies In A Partnership. 127
Alberta Education Officials 128
Superintendents/Directors of Education 129
Teachers/Principals 131
Elders 133
Chiefs 133

4. The Role Of The Federal Government, The Potential For The Erosion Of Federal Responsibilities If The Province Were A Partner. 135
Alberta Education Officials 135
Superintendents/Directors of Education 136
Teachers/Principals 139
Elders 143
Chiefs 143

5. Benefits Of A Partnership With Provincial Education Authorities. 144
Alberta Education Officials 144
Superintendents/Directors of Education 145
Teachers/Principals 147
Elders 148
Chiefs 149

6. Visions, Expectations And Criteria For A Partnership. 150
Alberta Education Officials 150
Superintendents/Directors of Education 152
Teachers/Principals 156
Elders 158
Chiefs 159

7. Initiating Partnership Discussions. 160
Alberta Education Officials 160
Superintendents/Directors of Education 161

Teachers/Principals 161
Elders 162
Chiefs 163

Summary 163

CHAPTER 9

ELEMENTS OF A PARTNERSHIP 166

Treaty Rights 167

Downloading of Responsibilities 167

First Nations' Veto 168

Access to Information 169

Equal Say 170

Treaties As A Basis 170

Applicability 171

Legislation 171

Power 172

Community Based 173

Non-Legal and Non-Binding 174

Resources 174

Flexible Partnerships 175

First Nations' Role 175

Consultation....176
All Partners Present....177
Initiating Partnership Discussions....177
Transitional....177

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS....179
Overview of the Study....179
Summary of Research Findings....181
Implications....184
Conclusions....186
Recommendations....188
General....188
Alberta Government....188
Alberta Learning....190
First Nations....191
Other Agencies and Organizations....193
Future Study....194
Purpose Revisited....195

REFERENCES....197

APPENDIX A....207

APPENDIX B....211

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

> I'll tell you a little story. Being Cree I grew up in the bush. My kids grew up in one of these small communities. I challenge anyone from mainstream society to this dare. I will take any grade 8 student from a public school board to come up north and I will drop them off in the bush with my own son. I want you to see who comes out of that bush; whether it be in one piece or all scarred up. I will guarantee you this, my son will come out of there in no time, while the other kid from mainstream society will be walking around out there in circles. Take me for example. Drop me off in the bush with just a small pocketknife. Drop me off with someone from Calgary. I will come out of there. I will survive. I will not guarantee that the other one will, and if he does he will be in terribly bad shape. But you know, my son will not let anyone suffer out there in the bush and neither will I. I would not leave you out there, my son would not leave you out there, we would help you get out. We would help.
> (S. Noskey, 1998)

For more than 20 years I have worked in a provincial school jurisdiction that is responsible for providing educational services to primarily First Nation communities. These communities are located in the northern half of the province of Alberta and consist of First Nation Reserves, Metis Settlements, and Aboriginal communities without a negotiated land base. The governance and control of educational services is often a contentious issue in some of these communities. First Nation governments are often unsuccessful in having their request for educational governance representation accommodated, because of provincial government regulations, guidelines, and legislation. I advocate that First Nation communities should have full authority over educational services to their members, irrespective of location, and that this authority should encompass all aspects of the delivery of education. My intent in undertaking this research is to develop a model of First Nation/Provincial education authority partnerships that will ensure full First Nation control of education, supported by a partnership with provincial authorities.

As an introduction to this thesis I believe it is necessary to provide background information related to Aboriginal education. This information will

include Historical, Constitutional, Legal, Financial, and Organizational background perspectives. The intent of providing these perspectives is two-fold. Firstly, it is to provide the reader with a brief historical perspective of Aboriginal education. Such a perspective will help give insights into those factors that have helped shape current attitudes and views toward Aboriginal education. Secondly, and more importantly, these perspectives will provide information that is necessary in order to determine and appreciate what has to be considered when negotiating partnerships.

Historical Background

Goddard (1993) surmised, "the history of the education of Indian peoples in Canada can be arranged into four distinct phases" (p. 163). He stated that the first phase was prior to European settlement. Then "the Aboriginal peoples had an efficient system of informal education practices that transmitted the accumulated knowledge, wisdom, beliefs, and values of each First Nation from one generation to the next" (p. 163). This form of education centered around the skills necessary for an individual to assume a productive place in an established society. Battiste and Barman (1995) contended, "prior to the influx of Europeans each nation of Indian had its own form of education" (p. 8). "Generally these traditional Indian forms can be characterized as oral histories, teaching stories, ceremonies, apprenticeships, learning games, formal instruction, tutoring, and tag along teaching" (Buffalohead, 1976, cited in Battiste & Barman, 1995, p. 8). Basic, however, to all First Nations, according to Battiste and Barman, was that the traditional methods of teaching

> occurred within cultural settings that were characterized by subsistence economies, in-context learning, personal and kinship relations between teacher and students, and ample opportunities for students to observe adult role models who exemplified the knowledge, skills and values being taught. (p. 8)

In the traditional Indian society each adult was personally responsible for the education of each child and had to ensure that each child learned what was

necessary to lead a good life (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972). This form of education lasted until it was interrupted by European settlement in this country.

According to Goddard (1993)

> the next significant phase of Indian education was epitomized by the establishment of reserves and the formalization of education. Schools were established, through the efforts of both church and state, in an attempt to "civilize" and "assimilate" Indian peoples into the dominant Canadian society. (p. 163)

This era in the history of Native education has been described by Battiste and Barman (1995) as "schooling for assimilation" (p. 9). Supporting this description, Oleska and Dauenhauer (1982, cited in Battiste & Barman, 1995) stated that

> these schools for assimilation were characterized by high failure rates in literacy and educational attainment, having assimilation rather than self determination as goals, poor school community relations, negative attitudes toward Native cultures, and prohibition or non use of Native languages. (p. 9)

The educational system at this time tore at the very social and cultural fabric of First Nations peoples. Goddard (1993) concurred when he stated that "the social fabric of the First Nations was being destroyed and many of the problems facing contemporary Indians had their germination in this period" (p. 163). The educational system was systematically designed to assimilate the First Nations peoples to the larger society.

The third phase of education began in the mid 1960's and was related to studies, legislation, and agreements. The significant reports during this era were the Federal government's *White Paper* in 1969 and the 1972 National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) report titled *Indian Control of Indian Education.* According to Goddard (1993) the *White Paper* recognized "the imbalance of educational opportunity that confronted Indian and non-Indian children" (p. 164). Among other things the *White Paper* raised the issue of who should be responsible for education of Indian children by suggesting they become citizens of the province in which they lived. This was rejected by both the provinces and the Indian people themselves. The NIB report, *Indian Control of Indian Education,* was

written in response to the issues of responsibility and what was happening in Indian education. This report "identified the issues of responsibility, programs, teachers and facilities as being four areas in need of urgent attention and improvement" (p. 4). It then suggested principles and guidelines which could be applied to resolve specific problems in the four areas.

Two types of agreements were significant during this phase of Indian education. The first was the establishment of a joint funding arrangement between the federal and provincial governments that, according to Goddard (1993), "required Indian children to attend provincial schools" (p. 164). This type of agreement was a cost-sharing agreement only. It did not, in Goddard's view, mandate schools to provide "culturally appropriate curricula for Indian students, to consider Indian learning styles, to recognized Indian kinship systems and world views, or in any way to provide Indian parents with input into school governance" (p. 164).

The second type of significant agreement in this phase was the tuition agreements. During this period there were primarily three types of tuition agreements:

1. Master tuition agreements between the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) and the province;
2. Individual tuition agreements between DIAND and a school jurisdiction;
3. Tripartite tuition agreements between DIAND, the band, and the school jurisdiction.

These tuition agreements will be discussed later, in detail, in the section dealing with organizational perspectives on the delivery of educational services to Native children.

The fourth phase in the historical development of Aboriginal education, according to Goddard (1993), was the establishment of "band controlled schools and the gradual downsizing of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)" (p. 164). Littlechild (1995) contended that Band control came about primarily because of two reasons. The first, as stated by Cummins (1985), related to "years of dissatisfaction by Indian people with the education system,

primarily because the schools were meant to cater to white, middle class North America" (p. 17). As a result programs were never developed to meet the particular needs of aboriginal children. Second, as noted by Littlechild (1995), "for many Indian communities, Band control is the only viable medium through which they can address or begin addressing many of the faults they've found with the education system" (p. 25).

Constitutional Background

The earliest constitutional reference to aboriginal peoples is found in 1755 when the British Crown established the British Indian Department. This was later followed by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Information Sheet No. 15, 1995). In this proclamation, the British Government acknowledged that the interests of Indian people and their land must be protected, and the Indian people must be dealt with fairly if that interest were extinguished. The government of the day felt that it was necessary to protect the interests of the aboriginal population as more of the land became occupied by settlers.

In 1867 the responsibility for Indian Affairs was transferred from the British Crown to the government of the province of Canada. "At the time of Confederation the new federal government was given legislative authority over "Indians and land reserved for the Indians through the *Constitution Act*, 1867" (INAC, Information Sheet No. 15, 1995, p. 1). Henderson (1996) noted, "the first federal legislation about Indians after Confederation was the *1868 Secretary of State Act*, soon followed [in 1869] by *The Gradual Enfranchisement Act*" (p. 3). According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996a) "the *Gradual Enfranchisement Act* marked the formal adoption by parliament of the goal of assimilation (p. 274). These statutes were consolidated in the *Revised Statutes*, 1876" (Henderson,1996, p. 3). In 1876, the *Indian Act*, which is the definitive expression of federal jurisdiction in this area, "was passed, and a series of treaties were concluded between Canada and various Indian bands across the country" (INAC Information Sheet No. 15, 1995).

The *Indian Act* has undergone a number of revisions since its original adoption. The most significant was a wide sweeping attempt that led to the 1969 White Paper. According to the House of Commons Report of the Special Committee (1983) "between July 1968 and May 1969 the federal government embarked on a series of consultations throughout Canada to identify changes that should be made to the *Indian Act*" (p. 20). In response, the federal government " advanced the 1969 White Paper which would abolish Indian Status, Indian Reserves, Indian Treaties, the Indian Department and the Indian Act" (Henderson, 1996, p. 2). This paper met with considerable resistance. "Adverse Indian and public reaction to the proposal to terminate the special status of Indians was so strong that the government withdrew the paper in 1971" (House of Parliament, Report of the Special Committee, 1983, p. 20).

In 1982 the *Constitution Act* and the proclamation of the *Charter of Rights and Fréedoms* led to important changes in *the Indian Act*. One of these changes related to enfranchisement. According to Henderson (1996) the "Government [of Canada] had long promised to remove voluntary enfranchisement from the Act" (p. 1). Enfranchisement relates to the clause of the *Indian Act* that deprived Indian women of their legal and Band status if they married non-status men. The enfranchisement clause also had relevance to those clauses of the *Indian Act* that related to education, as "Indians who obtained college degrees, or were admitted to a profession, or became clergymen, were automatically disenfranchised under the Act" (Henderson, 1996). With the equal rights provision of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* coming into effect in 1985, and the enactment of *Bill C31* of the same year, all discriminatory provisions of the *Indian Act* were removed. In fact *Bill C31* not only removed discriminatory provisions, it also reinstated those who had previously lost their status, and recognized the status of their children. According to Henderson (1996), "this move greatly increased the status Indian population, creating increased demands upon community and government resources which have yet to be resolved" (p. 2). Indian and Northern Affairs Canada in *The Outlook on Priorities and Expenditures: 1995-1996* to1996-*1997* (1995) estimated that the

population of status Indians on reserves was 326,444 in 1993 and growing at a rate 2.3 times the overall Canadian rate (p. 8). Unofficial 1995 demographic estimates place the 1996 status Indian population in Canada, on and off reserve, at approximately 600,000. This is double the 1985 population of approximately 300,000 status Indians and is partly attributed to the enactment of *Bill C31* (Henderson, 1996, p. 2). This Bill eliminated certain discriminatory provisions of the *Indian Act*. According to an Indian and Northern Affairs Canada information bulletin (November, 1997) "since 1985, about 105,000 individuals have successfully regained their status" (p. 1). *Bill C31* also made provisions for increased Indian control over their own affairs.

Sections 109 through to 122 of the *Indian Act* deal specifically with education. In these sections, the Governor General in Council authorizes the Minister, in accordance with the Act, to enter into agreements on behalf of her Majesty, for the education of Indian children. The powers that may be authorized to the Minister include the power "to enter into agreements with the government of a province; a public or separate school board; and a religious or charitable organization" (Section 114), the power to "establish, operate and maintain schools for Indian children" (Section 114 (2)), and the power to make regulations with respect to standards for all aspects of the delivery of education including buildings, teaching, equipment, discipline, and transportation (Section 115), and the power to set regulations respecting attendance (Section 116). It was under the authority of these sections of the *Indian Act*, [during the assimilation era,] that "Indian children were removed from their homes, under the Minister's authority to educate them, and sent to residential schools" (Henderson, 1996, p. 1).

Legal Background

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), created in 1966, is responsible for Indian and Inuit Affairs and for the residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories and their resources. It is also responsible

for fulfilling "the lawful obligations of the federal government to Aboriginal peoples as outlined in treaties, the *Indian Act* and other legislation" (INAC, 1995).

> The Indian Act assigns specific trust responsibilities to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development with respect to Indian monies, estates, and reserve lands, and creates responsibilities for elementary and secondary education and band government. The department itself has the primary federal mandate for the provision of basic services to registered Indians living on reserves, including the funding of First Nations for education. (INAC, 1996, p. 3)

As such, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is responsible for funding the delivery of basic services to First Nation communities, including the delivery of educational services.

There are 43 First Nations in three treaty areas in Alberta. These treaties helped establish the legal framework of responsibility for the education of First Nations' children in this province. Treaty 6 (1876), between "Her Majesty the Queen and the Plain and Wood Cree Indians and other Tribes of Indians at Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt and Battle River with Adhesions" states "Her Majesty agrees to maintain schools for instruction in such reserves hereby made as to Her Government of the Dominion of Canada may seem advisable, whenever the Indians of the Reserve shall desire it" (p. 3). Treaty No. 7 (1877), between "Her Majesty the Queen and the Blackfeet and Other Indian Tribes, at the Blackfoot Crossing of Bow River and Fort McLeod," expanded the commitment to education in stating "Her Majesty agrees to pay the salary of such teachers to instruct the children of said Indians as to Her Government of Canada may seem advisable, when said Indians are settled on their Reserves and shall desire teachers" (p. 5). Treaty No. 8, signed June 21, 1899, near Lesser Slave Lake, covers portions of Northern Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and a part of the North West Territories. The Report of Commissioners for Treaty 8 (1899) assured the 22 Alberta First Nations

> that there was no need of any special stipulation, as it was the policy of the Government to provide in every part of the country, as far as circumstances would permit, for the education of Indian children, and that the law, which was as strong as a treaty, provided for non interference

> with the religions of the Indians in schools maintained or assisted by the Government. (p. 6)

The Treaty then stated, "Her Majesty agrees to pay the salary of such teachers to instruct the children of said Indians as to Her Majesty's Government of Canada may seem advisable" (p. 13).

Financial Background

As stated in the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996b), the existing financial arrangements for Aboriginal governments and regional and territorial governments "fall into three programs of transfer from DIAND: contribution arrangements, comprehensive funding arrangements, and alternative funding arrangements" (Appendix 3A, p. 411).

Contribution arrangements, according to the Royal Commission "are used to fund programs or projects requiring significant interaction between DIAND and the recipient government, such as major capital projects" (Appendix 3A, p. 411). Contribution arrangements involve extensive terms and conditions "that stipulate matters such as the services to be provided, to whom, and what expenses are eligible for reimbursement" (Appendix 3A, p. 411). Any amount of the contribution arrangement that is not expended is to be returned to the federal government.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) described comprehensive funding arrangements (CFA) as "a mix of contributions, lump sum grant funding, and flexible transfer payments" (Appendix A, p. 411).

Contributions "are open-ended financing arrangements in which DIAND undertakes to finance all eligible expenditures associated with the provision of particular services to band members" (Appendix A3, p. 411). Under these arrangements DIAND maintains control over all aspects of the programs including design and allocation of dollars, "while band governments are responsible for administering the services and reporting regularly to the federal government" (Appendix 3A, p. 411). Prior to the broadening of the CFA program to include a mix of contributions, lump sum grant funding, and flexible transfer

payments "contribution agreements were the primary instrument for financing band government activities" (Appendix 3A, p. 411). Now, according to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, contribution agreements fund primarily services that involve high levels of technology or a high risk.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) described grants, as a portion of a CFA program, as funding "specifically earmarked for financing the institutions of band government and their administration. This is an unconditional grant, with no specific terms or conditions attached to it" (Appendix 3A, p. 412).

Flexible transfer payments (FTP) are described by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) as "special transfer payments that were introduced as an alternative to contribution agreements, providing for increased flexibility in the form of more autonomy for band governments to determine the means of delivering specified services" (Appendix 3A, p. 412). If there are any savings realized in the FTP, bands are at liberty to expend these savings, as opposed to contribution arrangement non-expended dollars, as they see fit. An FTP does allow the individual band a limited autonomy, however as pointed out by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) this autonomy is "traded off against more onerous reporting requirements compared to contribution agreements" (Appendix 3A, p. 412).

Alternative funding arrangements (AFA) were established as an alternative to the CFA program. According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b), the AFA "now accounts for 20 per cent of all funding transferred to band governments from DIAND" (Appendix 3A, p. 412). AFA budgets are usually set on a multi-year basis to deliver programs which meet stated program requirements. The AFA program also allows for the same autonomy afforded a band through the CFA program. In entering into an AFA program, a band will negotiate with DIAND, a conditional grant for the provision of services. "Once the funds are transferred, however, band governments have the authority to redesign programs and to reallocate funds between various

programs and projects" (The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996b, Appendix 3A, p. 412).

Organizational Background

Elementary and secondary educational services to Indian children are usually provided by one of three education systems: "federal schools, band operated schools or schools under provincial education authorities. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is also authorized to contribute funding to cultural/educational centres and local education authorities" (INAC, Information Sheet #5, 1991).

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is responsible, in total, for six major programs related to the education of Indian and Inuit children. These include band operated schools, federal schools, provincial schools, cultural/educational centres program, cultural and linguistic section, and support services for elementary and secondary schools.

Band Operated Schools

Under DIAND funding arrangements, band councils may opt to administer all aspects of their educational facility. "During the past 13 years, an increasing number of bands have been taking charge of their education programs. Band operated schools have been established across the country, and this trend toward local autonomy is expected to continue (INAC, 1991, p. 2). Littlechild (1995) noted that the movement toward Band control of education was initiated in 1972 by the NIB, in response to the 1969 White Paper (p. 21). A policy paper issued by NIB (1972) entitled *Indian Control of Indian Education* declared the right of Indian Nations to control the education of their children. Band controlled schools are based on community support and generally, parents feel a greater attachment to, and ownership of, their children's education. These schools are also characterized by elder involvement, culturally relevant courses and first language instruction (INAC, 1991). There has been a steady increase in the number of on reserve schools operated by band education authorities in the last twenty years. According to INAC statistics, in 1975 there were 54 band-operated

schools and in the 1990/91 school year 313 of the 366 on reserve schools were band operated. During this period the number of students attending band-operated schools rose from 3,340 to 40,508 (INAC, 1991). It has been generally recognized that there has been an increase in attendance, retention, and parental involvement because of the band operated initiatives. According to *Basic Department Data* (1995), a publication of INAC, "Indian bands are assuming more control in the education of Indian children on reserve. The number of band-operated schools increased from 64 in 1976/77 to 412 in 1994/95" (p. 44).

Federal Schools

The era of federal schools, According to Littlechild (1995), "makes up only a small portion of the history of Indian education in Canada. This period started in earnest in the 1960s and continues up until today" (p. 17). However, it is clearly coming to a close. In 1991 there were 53 federal schools in Canada. These federal schools operate in much the same fashion as schools under provincial jurisdictions and offer the curriculum of the province in which they are situated. Characteristic to these schools are levels of band council or education authority involvement. This involvement is designed to facilitate the eventual band take over and management of the educational facility (INAC, 1991). According to Littlechild, in 1995 there were only four remaining federally operated schools in Alberta and it is the intention of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to eventually transfer these schools to Band control, as part of their devolution process (p. 1). This is supported by the INAC (1995) *Basic Department Data* which noted that "the proportion of children enrolled in federal schools dropped to two percent in 1994/95 from 42 percent 1976/77" (p. 46). According to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1999, there is one remaining federally operated school in Alberta.

Provincial Schools

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) enters into agreements with provincial school jurisdictions to provide spaces in

provincial schools attended by significant numbers of Indian students. All agreements negotiated by provincial jurisdictions require the approval of the minister of education for the province. Through these capital agreements and tuition agreements negotiated by the department, or bands, or both, Indian students attend provincial schools on the same basis as other provincial residents (INAC, 1991, p. 5).

These capital and tuition agreements vary in their format but there are basically four types.

1. the master tuition agreement,
2. the individual tuition agreement,
3. the tripartite agreement, and
4. the bilateral agreement.

The Master Tuition Agreement

A master tuition agreement can exist between DIAND and the Ministry of Education of a given province. In such an agreement a provincial education authority delivers educational services to First Nation children. This form of tuition agreement is basically a contract for service and the department agrees to pay the provincial authority a cost per student, usually based on an average audited cost. According to Littlechild (1995), "British Columbia and New Brunswick are only two provinces left in Canada with Master Tuition Agreements" (p. 13). The Master Tuition Agreement is often used as a resource guide for negotiating individual, tripartite, or bilateral agreements.

The Individual Tuition Agreement

This form of an agreement is similar to the master tuition agreement with the exception that the agreement is signed with a school jurisdiction rather than a provincial educational authority. These agreements allow for a little more flexibility in purchasing specialized programs required of aboriginal students. The respective band is included in the negotiations and all agreements are subject to DIAND approval.

The Tripartite Tuition Agreement

In this agreement the three parties, the First Nation, DIAND, and the provincial school jurisdiction, outline their respective responsibilities in the delivery of education to First Nation children (Littlechild, 1995). A tripartite agreement is, in most cases, an operational agreement, negotiated by a band council with a provincial school jurisdiction. A tripartite agreement requires the approval of the provincial Minister of Education and DIAND.

The Bilateral Tuition Agreement

As the name suggests this agreement is between two parties, the First Nation and the school jurisdiction and, for practical purposes, excludes DIAND. DIAND acts merely as the providers of funds to the Band and has no jurisdiction in the agreement. As new alternate funding arrangements are agreed upon between a First Nation and DIAND this type of agreement is becoming more popular. A bilateral agreement allows a First Nation to tailor an agreement, with a willing jurisdiction, to suit the particular needs and wants of their children. These agreements are usually transitional in nature as in many cases they are the final steps before a band takes control of its own school. In light of the present self-government initiatives and the movement to Band controlled schools, tuition agreements, in one form or another, will need to remain in order to enter into any partnership agreement with another agency or organization who will offer services to Band members on or off a reserve.

Need for the Study

Hampton (1993) stated, "no aspect of a culture is more vital to it's integrity than its means of education" (p. 267). As with any peoples, the First Nations of Canada consider the jurisdiction and control over education to be vital to their development and survival as a culture. Taylor, Crago and McAlpine (1993) concurred. They stated, "it may not be realistic to believe that the integrity of Aboriginal culture can be maintained if education is designed to represent mainstream values exclusively" (p. 179). This desire for control of education was

expressed in 1972 when the Assembly of First Nations presented an educational policy paper entitled *Indian Control of Indian Education* to the Federal Government. Again in 1988, a National Review of First Nation Education conducted by the Assembly of First Nations entitled *Tradition and Education: Toward a Vision of Our Future* recommended full First Nation control of education.

The debate continues on how much has been accomplished in the area of Indian control of Indian education. Most Aboriginal communities have assumed more control by establishing Band controlled schools. However, some educators question the "control" in Band controlled. Goddard (1996) described Band controlled schools as a means by which the federal policy of assimilation has been, and continues to be, perpetuated (pp. 2-3). Others, including Urion (1992), and Hall (1992), suggested that Bands do not really control education but only administer it. Goddard (1993) supports his view in stating that

> control implies that one has the ability to change, experiment, develop, and grow; it implies that one can identify needs and then plan and implement strategies to meet those needs; it implies that one can control income and expenditures ; establish criteria for success, and have direct governance of one's own affairs. This is not the case with when one refers to a Band controlled education system (p. 165).

Pauls (1996) took a contrary stand and stated that it can be argued that First Nations do in fact exercise a considerable degree of control in the operation of their schools (p. 104). Whatever the perspective, because of an administrative decree, which is not based on the *Constitution*, Band operated or controlled schools require a degree of provincial partnerships because they are required, according to Federal funding agreements, to follow the curriculum of the province in which they are located, have certified teachers for direct instruction, and, it is expected and advised that students complete provincial diploma examinations. Nor do present devolution policies of the federal government address First Nation students attending provincial schools, and arrangements for the education of these students must be dealt with in First Nations/provincial jurisdiction, tuition agreements. Recent research has supported the concept of

defined partnerships. Pauls (1996) stated, "most of the administrators [he] talked with feel that there is a need for some type of relationship with the provincial department of education" (p. 258). He further stated that

> the extent to which the relationship should go is debatable. Some organizations feel that any relationship should be temporary until parallel Indian structures can be established. Some feel that the existing ties between themselves and the provincial departments of education should be strengthened. (p. 258)

Littlechild (1995) urged boards to promote and utilize the partnership approach, especially in regards to tuition agreements. Goddard (1993) stated that "it is time to consider sharing resources and entering into partnerships with provincial school boards" (p. 167). Partnerships were also supported by Wildcat (1995) who, in discussing his vision of education, called for the development of a network, linking band operated school systems, to share ideas so a new model of education could grow (p. 120). The concept of partnerships and sharing of resources and expertise has been discussed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a model of educational partnership between First Nation communities and provincial education authorities.

Statement of the Problem

Self-government initiatives, new financial arrangements with the federal government, the devolution of control from a centralized government to a decentralized model of self governance, and in particular the desire by First Nations people to ensure the development and survival of their culture, have led many First Nation communities to assume control of services previously operated by the Federal Government. In terms of educational delivery, self-government legislation and community empowerment may just be the beginning of the process. A number of issues and initiatives could come to the forefront in the foreseeable future. With economic and social ties to neighboring communities and the country, First Nation governance will inevitably be

establishing strong links with individual provincial authorities. In addition, First Nations are culturally and politically distinct from nation to nation and will wish to maintain this distinction.

Irrespective of the issues and initiatives, it is expected that there will be a "rapid development that promises to change the term 'Indian Education' to mean education by Indians rather than simply education of Indians" (Chavers in Battiste & Barman, 1995, p. 9). Considering this, along with changes in government philosophy related to the delivery of education, and in initiatives relating to self-government, severe burdens will be placed on local bands and communities.

As the federal government departments devolve their services, the potential exists for First Nation communities to become isolated, left with the task of coping with substantial change and possibly lacking the tools, resources and support mechanisms to ensure success. Considering this, the construction of partnerships between First nations and the provinces is a viable and essential consideration when addressing educational mandates and initiatives.

Significance of the Study

First Nations

It is apparent that many first Nation communities are in the process of defining and developing self-government. Central to a self-governing nation, and to the very survival of the culture, is control of educational delivery. As noted by Hampton (1993) "no aspect of a culture is more vital to its integrity than its means of education" (p. 267).

This study is of significance to First Nations' governance because it potentially could give First Nations better access to provincial educational systems. In addition, schools that are contemplating band control would now have available to them a viable consideration if they so desired. For those First Nation schools which already have assumed band control status this study opens the door to shared resources and the potential benefit of combining resources. For those First Nation communities that send their children off

reserve to provincial school jurisdictions, this study may offer alternatives and enhance tuition agreements.

Another potential significance relates to self-government initiatives. In draft self-government agreements, many First Nations will be exercising control over services for Band members living off reserve. In the past, financial responsibility for these members rested solely with the province. These issues and problems are almost inevitable given the move toward self-governance. Under such circumstances it becomes imperative to address the resources problem. A model of partnership could be useful.

Province

This study will be of significance to the province because a substantial number of First Nation children attend provincial school jurisdictions. As new self-government agreements are realized, First Nation communities will be seeking input into provincial systems and a partnership could help address this issue. In addition, the province, through partnerships, will be better able to address educational needs of First Nation children as a result of the better communication channels. This study will also have the potential to open avenues to First Nations that the province has not traditionally accessed.

School Jurisdictions

Many school jurisdictions in the province of Alberta have tuition agreements with First Nation communities. This study is of significance to these jurisdictions because it will provide them with a model to use in negotiations with First Nation communities. The needs, wants, and aspirations of First Nation communities will be more apparent.

This study is also of significance to schools in the province that are more remote or isolated because of their size, geographic location and non-alignment with a jurisdiction or other schools.

Most importantly, there is significance for students served. Partnerships will ensure a cooperation and access to the provincial curriculum, services, and school accreditation, which will increase qualifications and result in a more

equitable access to post secondary opportunities and post secondary institutions. Non-Aboriginal children will also benefit from the exposure to new curricula and Aboriginal perspectives.

Theory

This study is of significance to theory as it will contribute to the understanding of power and the concept of power from the perspective of First Nations.

Definitions

The following terms and definitions are derived from the federal *Indian Act* the *Constitution Act, 1982,* Bill C-31, and from common usage. (Government of Alberta, Aboriginal Affairs, Terms and Definitions)

Aboriginal People

Refers to the descendants of the original inhabitants of Canada. Aboriginal people are defined in the *Constitution Act, 1982* as all "indigenous people including Indians, Metis and Inuit." The Constitution does not define membership in the individual groups.

Band or First Nation

A Band is defined in the *Indian Act* as a body of Indians for whose common use and benefit lands have been set aside or monies held by the Government of Canada or declared by the Governor in Council to be a Band. Most Bands prefer to be referred to as First Nations.

Bill C-31

This is an Act to amend *the Indian Act.* It was enacted in June, 1985. This legislation amended the *Indian Act* to remove discriminatory clauses against women, restore status and membership rights, and increase Indian Control over their own affairs. Those people who have been reinstated as Status Indians under this *Act,* are often referred to as Bill C-31 Indians.

Constitution Act (B.N.A. Act) 1867

Section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act (1867)* states that legislative authority for "Indians, and Lands Reserved for Indians" rests with the Federal Government.

Crown Lands

Land under the control of the federal or provincial government. Most Crown land is controlled by the province.

First Nation

A term that came into common usage in the 1970's to replace the word "Indian", which many people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term "First Nation peoples" refers to the Indian people in Canada, both Status and Non-Status. Many Indian people have also adopted the term "First Nation" to replace the word "band" in the name of their community (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Information, November 1997).

Indian Act

The principal federal statute dealing with Registered Status Indians or Treaty Indians, local government, and the management of reserve lands and communal monies.

Metis

A French word meaning "mixed blood" which usually refers to people of mixed ancestry who emerged during the days of the fur trade when Europeans and Indian people had children. The Metis are recognized as Aboriginal people in the *Constitution Act, 1982.*

The National Indian Brotherhood

This is the national organization of Indians who responded to the *White Paper* by proposing their own *Orange Paper* that demanded Indian control of Indian education. The NIB is now called the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) (Pauls, 1996, p. 12).

Native

A comprehensive term used to describe people of aboriginal ancestry. This term includes status and treaty Indians, non-status Indians, Metis, and Inuit (Pauls, 1996, p. 12). This term is more popular and accepted in some provinces than others.

Reserve

The *Indian Act* describes a reserve as a tract of land, which has been set apart by the Crown for the use and benefit of a Band, and for which the legal title rests with the Crown in the right of Canada. The federal government has primary jurisdiction over these lands and the people living on them.

Royal Proclamation of 1763

The British Government proclaimed that the interest of Indian people and their land must be protected, and the Indian people must be dealt with fairly if that interest is extinguished. This proclamation was necessary to protect the interests of Indian people in these lands, as British North America became occupied by settlers.

Self-government

The right to govern. This is not the same as sovereignty, but does include the right to administer taxes, pass laws, manage land and natural resources, negotiate with other governments and, in some instances, take responsibility for education, health, safety, and welfare services for a given community. The extent and application of self-government is negotiated with First Nations and the federal government. There are a number of self-government agreements in Canada.

Status or Registered Indian

A person who has been registered [with DIAND] or is entitled to be registered according to [Section 5(1) of] the *Indian Act.* Most registered Indians are members of an Indian Band. By virtue of the *Indian Act,* the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is responsible for providing support and services to all Registered Indians.

Treaty

A legal document that was signed with Indian bands and various British colonial, and later, Canadian governments. No two treaties are identical, but they usually provide certain rights, including annual payments for ammunition, annuities, clothing for the head men every three years, hunting fishing and reserve lands and other entitlements. In signing a treaty, the Indian Bands ceded, surrendered and yielded all their rights, titles and privileges to the designated lands.

Tribal Council

A group of individual First Nations who have amalgamated for service delivery or political purpose. In some cases Tribal Councils were arbitrarily established by Indian Affairs so that they would have an institution to which to devolve service delivery responsibilities (Pauls, 1996, p. 13).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> Power is always a gift from the Creator. The elder Joseph Nanooch would say every day a medicine man would have to ask the Creator to use the gift. It is not power in a European sense or context, it is more of a gift. It is a healing power (Personal interview).

Power and Authority

Who has the power? What are the sources of power? Who has the authority? Where is the locus of control? It is essential to understand the concepts of power and authority in order to put into perspective the underlying issues associated with this research. Understanding the intricacies of power and the authority relating to political and educational matters and Aboriginal people, is a key element in understanding the political and educational attitudes and structures that are prevalent today and are key to developing collaborative models for the future.

Power

Power is defined by Hoy and Miskel (1996) as "the ability to get others to do what you want them to do" (p. 171). Weber (1947; cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1996) defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance" (p. 171). According to Morgan (1986) one of the most accepted definitions of power comes from Robert Dahl, an American political scientist, who saw power as "an ability to get persons to do something that they would not otherwise have done" (p. 158). Abbott and Caracheo (1988) consider power to be a "force that determines behavioral outcomes in an intended direction in a situation involving human interaction" (p. 241), while Pfeffer (1992) defined power as "the ability to overcome resistance, to get others to do what you want" (p. 176). Irrespective of the particulars, the one common element in any definition of power, is the ability to exert one's will over other people. Burns (1978) drew a similar conclusion. He

stated that irrespective of the dimensions or context of power the process remains the same, "power wielders draw from their power bases resources relevant to their own motives and the motives and resources of others upon whom they exercise power" (p. 17).

In order to better understand this exertion, theorists have examined types and sources of power.

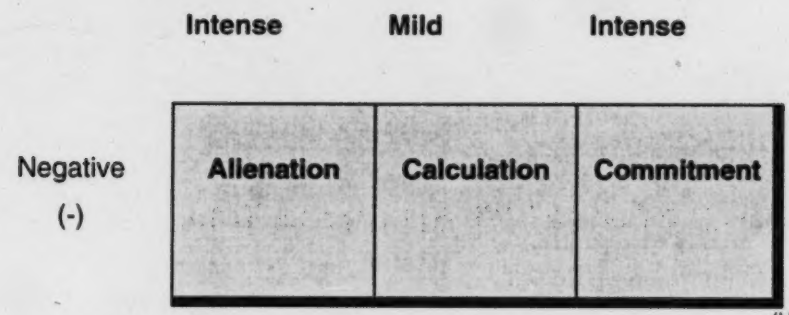
Types of Power

Hoy and Miskel (1996), reviewed the work of Etzioni, who, based on an examination of means used to make individuals comply with organizational directives, identified three types of power: coercive, remunerative, and normative (p. 180).

Coercive power, as explained by Hoy and Miskel (1996), can be based on either the actual or threatened application of physical sanctions. Remunerative power rests on the management of material resources and rewards. Normative power, as defined by Hoy and Miskel, "derives from the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards and sanctions" (p. 181).

Corresponding to each type of power are three reactions to power that, according to Hoy and Miskel (1996), Etzioni "characterized in terms of intensity and direction of the subordinates' involvement" (p. 181). Figure 1 helps illustrate this. As can be seen, involvement ranges along a continuum from negative through neutral to positive.

Figure 1 Zones of Involvement



(Hoy & Miskel, 1996).

According to Hoy and Miskel (1996) "intense positive involvement is called commitment; intense negative involvement is termed alienation; and mild [positive or mild negative] involvement is referred to as calculation" (p. 181). How does this then relate to organizations?

The three kinds of power and involvement identified by Etzioni were the basis for the development of his compliance typology. Although the three kinds of power and the three kinds of involvement yield a compliance typology with nine categories, three main organizational types are derived. These are: coercive, utilitarian, and normative organizations.

Coercive organizations are defined by Hoy and Miskel (1996) as organizations that "use force or the threat of force as the primary means to control the activities of lower level subordinates" (p. 182). Typical to these organizations, is a high degree of alienation. Utilitarian organizations "rely mostly on remuneration to gain power over low level subordinates, and the response is calculative involvement" (p. 182). The third type of organization is the normative organization. Such organizations use "normative power to maintain control over its participants, who generally are highly committed to the organization" (p. 183). Typically, organizations receive compliance from its members through the use of normative power.

Sources of Power

Morgan (1986) observed, "power is the medium through which conflicts of interest are ultimately resolved. Power influences who gets what, when, and how" (p. 158). He believes that it is necessary to recognize the importance of power in order to explain organizational affairs. In exploring power, Morgan identified what he considered to be the most important sources:

> a) formal authority; b) control of scarce resources; c) use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations; d) control of decision processes; e) control of knowledge and information; f) control of boundaries; g) ability to cope with uncertainty; h) control of technology; i) interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of informal organizations; j) control of counter organizations; k) symbolism and the management of meaning; l) gender and the management of gender relations; m) structural factors that define the stage of action; and, n) the power one already has. (p. 159)

These sources of power, according to Morgan, provide one with "an inventory of ideas through which we can begin to decode power plays and political dynamics in organizational contexts" (p. 185). Of particular interest to this study are the following sources of power: control of scarce resources; use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations; control of decision processes; control of knowledge and information; control of boundaries; interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of informal organization; structural factors; and the power one already has. A brief examination of these sources of power will lend important insights into the understanding of the concept of power as they relate to educational governance.

Control of scarce resources. An adequate flow of resources is essential to the survival of any organization. According to Morgan (1986) "an ability to exercise control over these resources can provide an important source of power within and between organizations" (p. 161). If a resource is scarce and someone within the organization requires or is dependent on this resource then this can be translated into power (p. 161). Money is referred to as the most common resource. Money can be converted into most things. Pfeffer (1992) considers this to be the new golden rule, a play on the old rule of whoever owns the gold,

controls. However, it is not only the amount of money that offers control, it is the ability to also determine the allocation.

Use of organizational structure, rules, and regulations. The ability to institute structural changes within any organization is considered a source of power as is control over the structure. Downsizing an organization, shifting resources from one department to another, or changing the status of a group or department, is an indication of power within the organization. Rules and regulations provide a similar power function. According to Morgan (1986), "rules and regulations are often created, invoked, and used in either a proactive or retrospective fashion as part of a power play" (p. 165). Mechanic (1962) also recognized rules as a source of power. He argues that rules "are a functional equivalent for direct, personally given orders, since they specify the obligation of workers to do things in specific ways" (p. 362).

Control of decision process. Morgan (1986) has suggested, "an ability to influence the outcomes of decision making processes is a well recognized source of power" (p. 165). As most organizations depend upon decisions in order to maintain operations and competitiveness, an individual or group who can influence these decisions has an influence in the organization. In discussing the kinds of power we find in decision making, Morgan suggested it was useful to "distinguish between control of three interrelated elements; decision premises, decision processes, and decision issues and objectives" (p. 166).

Decision processes relate to ways members or groups in an organization are able to control or manipulate the political activities. Control of the agenda, redirecting attention from significant issues by making marginal changes elsewhere, and shaping the way the organization thinks by building constraints on visions, beliefs, are all strategies, according to Morgan (1986) that prevent us from seeing other ways of formulating our basic concerns and the alternative course of action available (p. 166).

Control of decision-making processes, according to Morgan, is usually more visible than the control of the premises (p. 166). How should a decision be made? When will a decision be made? Who should be involved? Should it go

to a committee prior to being dealt with by the board? Such ground rules, used to guide the decision making process, are important variables that organization members can use to influence or manipulate a decision (p. 167).

"A final way of controlling the decision making is to influence the issues and objectives to be addressed, and the evaluative criteria to be employed" (Morgan, 1986, p. 167). It is possible, through the preparation of reports and involvement in discussions, to influence the issues and objectives. This is usually most effective for those who have a command of the language and a command of the facts.

Control of knowledge and information. Dowding (1996) states that the old adage 'knowledge is power' is a very important one and describes it as one of the major sources of power (p. 62). He is of the opinion that having knowledge or information is important "not only for knowing what it is that you want to do, for understanding your own interests, it is also something that can be traded" (p. 62). As we are in the "information age" an individual or group who has control of knowledge and information is in a position of power. With control of information and knowledge a person is able to structure discussions and present information in a way that can influence the decision making process. Morgan (1986) observed that, "this draws attention to the key importance of knowledge and information as sources of power" (p.167). Organizations require knowledge and information. The ability of people or groups to direct, control, analyze, summarize, shape, and filter information "advances their own end" (p. 167). In addition to this, there are those in an organization who guard or protect access to information in an effort to develop a sense of importance or to enhance what Morgan referred to as "their indispensability and expert status" (p. 169). This, according to Morgan, is because the expert often carries an air of authority and power and as such can add considerable weight to a decision (p. 169).

Control of boundaries. The notion of boundaries, which Morgan (1986) refers to, "is used to describe the interface between different elements of an organization" (p. 171). If you are able to control the boundaries and the transactions between those boundaries then you have placed yourself in a

position of power. The quest for autonomy also relates to boundary control and the attainment of autonomy is considered to be power. People prefer to be in control of all elements of their life and control over the work place is no exception. Boundary control aids this preference by assisting or impeding individuals, groups, and even departments in their quest to become autonomous units and meet their particular goals within an organization. Autonomous units, as stated by Morgan (1986), are able to control their independence through selective recruitment and avoidance of issues that they perceive as threatening (p. 170). When groups in an organization are able to acquire a considerable degree of autonomy the organization becomes "loosely coupled groups and departments rather than a highly integrated unit" (p. 170).

Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) describe this source of power as the institutionalization of power. By this they mean "the establishment of relatively permanent structures and policies that favor the influence of a particular subunit" (p. 18). While in positions of power a particular subunit has the ability to institute riles and structures that potentially limit the potential of others (p. 18).

Interpersonal alliances, networks, and control of "informal organizations." Interpersonal alliances and networks, according to Morgan (1986), refer to "friends in high places; sponsors; mentors; and coalitions of people prepared to trade support and favors to further their individual ends. . ." (p. 173). These, with the informal networks that are used to sound out and touch base, all provide a source of power (Morgan, 1986). Mechanic (1962) in discussing similar power sources describes location and position, and coalitions as important sources of power. He contends that a person's "location in physical space and position in social space are important factors influencing access to persons, information and instrumentalities" (pp. 360-361). Coalitions, alliances and networks are used for a variety of purposes but primarily their function is to influence and inform. Coalitions also lend themselves to the creation of what Morgan refers to as informal organizations. These are organizations within organizations, whose leaders may potentially become "as powerful an influence on their group as any rule, regulation, or manager, and become forces to be recognized and respected

for the way their area of the organization operates" (Morgan, 1986, p. 174). Coalitions and alliances are potentially powerful. As noted by Morgan, "the attention currently given to the importance of corporate culture in determining an organization's success highlights the power possessed by leaders and other members . . . who shape the values and attitudes of the particular subculture to which they belong" (p. 174).

Structural factors. As Morgan (1986) noted, many within an organization, including the chief executives, often feel a sense of powerlessness. This he sees as a paradox given the number of power sources identified (pp.180-1). Such a paradox may develop for a number of reasons. People may feel hemmed in. There may be a sense of insecurity or impotence created by the internal environment. Morgan (1986) offered two explanations for this sense of powerlessness. One possible answer is that "access to power is so open, wide, and varied, that to a large extent power relations become more or less balanced" (p. 181). In other words, as you attain or amass power it is offset by the power that others acquire. A second possible explanation for the paradox "rests in the idea that it is important to distinguish between the surface manifestations and the deep structures of power" (p. 181). As an executive officer one must have access to considerable information, one controls an important budget, and one is a powerful person because of one's position. But, as Morgan observed, "[one's] ability to draw on and use these sources of power is underpinned by various structural factors" (p. 181). Power structures in an organization are varied and all employees at all levels have power to one degree or another, and they exercise this power. Morgan (1986) believes that an understanding of these levels and structures requires us to recognize and determine the position we hold and the role we play in an organization and the kind of structure and power that the structures permit us to access (pp. 181-183).

The power one already has. Power can lead to more power. The holding of power can give one access to more power. There is also an empowering aspect to power. Once you have met with success in one area you acquire

another project. This action can lead to more responsibility and more power. This action becomes the empowering force (Morgan, 1986, p. 184).

Authority

Authority, defined by Weber (1947; cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1996) "is the probability that certain specific commands from a given source will be obeyed by a given group of persons" (p. 171). Abbott and Caracheo (1988) stated that the term authority "refers to the capability of exercising power by virtue of the fact that an individual occupies a legally established position within a social institution" (p. 242). Given these definitions Hanson (1991) stated that "[t]his brings us to the key question. Why do people obey?" (p. 22) The answer he speculated, "relates to the legitimization of authority for the workers" (p. 22). Weber (1947; cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1996) defined three types of authority, all of which were legitimized for different reasons. Charismatic authority "rests on devotion to an extraordinary individual who is a leader by virtue of personal trust or exemplary qualities" (p. 172). "Charismatic authority tends to be non-rational, affective, or emotional and rests heavily on the leader's personal qualities and characteristics" (p. 172). Pfeffer (1992) stated that charismatic leaders often emerge in times of stress or crisis. "They create an emotional bond with others; they take on heroic proportions and appeal to the ideological values of followers" (p. 79). Charismatic authority, according to Hanson (1991), is "legitimized by the charismatic character of the leader, exemplified by the person who inspires great loyalty and confidence among his or her followers" (p. 22). The second type of authority, traditional authority, is legitimized by the sanctity of tradition. "The third type of authority, according to Weber, is the legal rational authority based on a belief in the supremacy of the law" (Hanson, 1991, p. 22).

Weber (1947; cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1996) stated, "traditional authority is anchored in an established belief in the sanctity of the status of those exercising authority in the past" (p. 172). Hoy and Miskel (1996), in speaking of charismatic authority, suggested that "obedience is owed to the traditionally sanctioned

position of authority, and the person who occupies the position inherits the authority established by custom" (p. 172).

Weber's third type of authority, legal authority, according to Hoy and Miskel (1996), "is based on enacted laws that can be changed by formally correct procedures" (p. 172).

Organizational theorists have extended the basic concepts of authority presented by Weber. Formal authority and functional authority, according to Hoy and Miskel (1996), are two of these extensions. Formal authority is described as "being vested in the organization and is legally established in positions, rules, and regulations" (p. 173). When you join an organization you accept the lines of authority and you accept the directives of your supervisors. However, when membership is compulsory or when joining an organization or a society is mandated and imposed, it is not to be unexpected that resistance to authority and a reluctance to comply with rules and regulations will appear.

Functional authority, according to Hoy and Miskel (1996), "has a variety of sources including authority of competence and authority of person" (p. 173). The premise here is that competence is not always limited to position. This premise leads to another type of authority; informal authority. Informal authority stems from the personal skills, behavior, and attributes of an individual and the fact that members of an organization often establish allegiances and support for their colleagues (p. 173).

Morgan (1986) wrote of authority as of a source of power. In his *Images of Organizations* he stated, "the first and most obvious source of power in an organization is formal authority, a form of legitimized power that is respected and acknowledged by those with whom one interacts" (p. 159).

A review of power and authority literature indicated that the terms are often used interchangeably. This observation is supported by Abbott and Caracheo (1988) who stated "contemporary studies on social organizations are replete with confusing terminology . . . this confusion exists because the terms power, authority, control, leadership, and influence tend to be interchangeable" (p. 239). This absence of a standard terminology was also observed by Dahl

(1984) who noted that with words like power and influence, "neither in ordinary language nor in political science is there agreement on terms and definition" (p. 20).

For the purpose of this research, power is defined in the perspective described by Schmookler (1984) who saw it as "the ability to restrict the range of another's choice" (p. 20). Authority will be understood as legitimized power. This exists, according to Hoy and Miskel (1996), "when a common set of beliefs. . . legitimizes the use of power" (p. 172). Authority requires common beliefs, voluntary compliance, and an acceptance of the fact that you may have to, as further stated by Hoy and Miskel, "suspend your own criteria of decision making and accept the organization's command" (p. 172). Authority is then exercised by a power source and voluntarily complied with when exercised.

An Aboriginal Concept of Power

In the analysis of power it becomes essential to trace traditional power perspectives and the existing power perspectives in the Aboriginal community in order to identify areas of potential conflict.

A single word for power, with a specific meaning and connotation, as in the European context, does not exist in the Aboriginal culture. Within the Cree community, a person who has power or someone who is considered to be a powerful person, is one who helps or serves, or one who does favors. In the Cree culture if you do favors or provide a service, then the person served is indebted to you and owes you. Power, and the acquisition of power, is similar to the practice of a potlatch or "give away" ceremony, in that power is acquired through giving something away. When you are offered and given something you cannot refuse and you would in return owe that person. What is given away is not necessarily material, in fact, it is more often in the form of service or favors. A person who has this kind of power is, in the Cree culture, referred to by the word *kihcihiymiht* meaning he or she is held in high esteem or he or she is highly esteemed (M. Cardinal-Collins, personal communication, March 24, 1997). A person who is referred to by *kihcihiymiht* has been described as a person who is

very friendly, a person who shows a lot of support for your endeavors, one who would attend public functions, and a person who would attend all funerals and show support for the family. This support would not be just an attendance at functions rather it would be demonstrated and proven through the person's actions.

The Cree culture makes another reference to power, *mamatawisit*, meaning spiritual power. *Mamatawisit* means that he or she has spiritual power, that he or she is a holy person or an unholy person. (M. Cardinal-Collins, personal communication, March 24, 1997). What is particularly interesting with this conception of power is that existent within it is a relationship with the creator. It is a special relationship with the spiritual beings. Spiritual power is given by God, it is a gift of God (P. Hernou, personal communication, March 25,1997). According to Hernou

> everyday a medicine man has to ask the Creator to use the gift. It is not power in a European sense or context, it is more of a gift. It is a healing power. It is a power given by God. It is not something you are able to create yourself. You pray to the Creator to use the gift in the right way. If you do not use it in the right way, you use the gift for yourself and then for evil. This is where bad medicine comes from.

Thus, in the Aboriginal context, power is not something that one obtains through position or through one's own deeds, or has bequeathed to one. It is not control, it is not something that is given away. It is a gift from the Creator. It is serving or being a servant.

What this illustrates is that within the Aboriginal culture the understanding of power is different from both the Weberian and Schmooklerian definitions. Stevenson, Johnson, and Greschner (1993) supported this position of a difference of understanding when they noted:

> "Power" in an Indian sense is understood according to a different set of values. In Aboriginal terms, "power" or empowerment is individual and can be equated with self-determination: the right to have control of your life and future, as an individual and as a community. Power is relational but not dichotomous or hierarchical. (p. 164)

McIver (1991) expanded on this understanding of the word power, and its relationship to an Aboriginal set of values when she stated

> I have. . . come to the conclusion that the terms in which we're speaking are non-Aboriginal terms. This is particularly true about the concept of power. As Aboriginal communities, we don't have power. What we have is responsibility for our people. . . . In Aboriginal communities, we don't have one person speaking for the community without consulting the community. That's the difference between power and responsibility. (p. 82)

Isaac and Maloughney (1992) drew attention to the emerging patterns of governance in Aboriginal communities. Traditionally, decisions affecting Aboriginal communities were arrived at through consensus. No one person, because of his or her position, would be in a position to carry out his or her will despite resistance, nor would this person have the ability to restrict the range of choices of others. They described the dichotomy that exists in Aboriginal communities where

> on the one hand, there are some Aboriginal communities putting into place systems of government akin to "white" standards (i.e. , elected band councils). On the other hand, there is a substantial movement by Aboriginal people to get in touch with their heritage and to build a rich history for survival in the future. (p. 456)

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996c) noted this potential for contradiction as well. Through their hearings they found that

> in some instances, Aboriginal communities have made traditional laws, practices and modes of leadership the basis of their contemporary governmental institutions. In other cases, however, traditional systems of governance have fallen into disuse or been replaced by new systems, such as those imposed by the *Indian Act*. (p. 115)

Boldt (1993) also recognized the rift that is emerging because of the conflicting power perspectives and feels that it "is a sure formula for chaos and self-defeat" (p. 130). He noted, "traditional Indian governance operated under structures, customs, norms, and values that gave the people effective control over their leaders. However after four generations of colonial rule, traditional patterns of control over leaders have disintegrated" (p. 130). This disintegration he credits to generations of control by DIAND that ran reserves and Indians,

through the colonial autocratic authority of the *Indian Act*. In analyzing the power concept in Aboriginal communities he concluded that

> unlike political and bureaucratic structures in Canadian society, which have evolved within the framework of democratic principles of government and administration. . . the political and bureaucratic structures on Indian reserves have evolved according to the DIAND's rigid, oppressive, authoritarian, colonial design for controlling Indians. (p. 128)

Boldt (1993) concluded that band and tribal councillors, as former students of DIAND, were indoctrinated with many colonial tendencies and their administration continues to adhere to DIAND's standards, norms, and expectations (p. 128). As a result, any transfer of power or devolution of responsibilities from DIAND to the band or tribal council will, in his opinion, carry with it the same colonial political and bureaucratic structures, and in reality

> is not a devolution of power to Indian peoples. Rather, the structures serve to concentrate devolved powers in the hands of a small Indian ruling elite class, thus continuing a century-old DIAND colonial pattern in which the mass of Indians are trapped outside the decision-making process. (p. 129)

Alfred (1999) states that indigenous thought has traditionally focused on questions regarding the nature and use of power rather than its distribution (p.49). He contends that there are two basic questions: "What kinds of power do individuals have? And are they using it appropriately" (p.49)? It is his view that the indigenous view of power has nothing to do with competition rather it focuses on whether or not it is "used in a way that contributes to the creation and maintenance of balance and peaceful coexistence in a web of relationships" (p. 49).

Abuse of Power

Alfred (1999) stated that under colonization "hundreds of indigenous nations that were previously autonomous and self-governing suffered a loss of freedom. Even today, the lives of their people are controlled by others" (p. 46). According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996a)

> the starting point that set the context for later abuses of power was the inherent ineffectiveness of the democratic political relationship as seen by

> the Aboriginal peoples. There has been a profound absence of representation for Aboriginal peoples in Canadian political institutions (p. 249).

The report of The Royal Commission (1996a) described the abuse of power as "not just periodic unfairness, but excessive and systematic political dominance, reflected in both the processes and outcomes of governance" (p. 248). The Commission, in recognizing the abuse of power, noted, "evidence of a lack of representation in traditional Canadian democratic processes is not hard to find" (p. 249). First Nations people did not have the right to vote in federal elections until 1960 (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996a, p. 249). Even after First Nations had won the right to vote, according to The Royal Commission (1996a), "the geographic dispersal of Aboriginal people -- still a small minority within federal and provincial electoral constituencies -- meant that political representation and leverage have been severely limited" (p. 249). Other factors, that undermined the aboriginal peoples' exercise of political authority, according to The Royal Commission, included the *Indian Act* and the "highly truncated authority Aboriginal governments exercise under [this act]" (p. 249), the absence, until recently, of national organizations, limited access to federal political parties, and complex levels of bureaucracy that allowed "government departments to deflect blame and postpone action" (p. 249).

The Royal Commission (1996a) also examined what they termed "False Assumptions" (p. 248). These assumptions they defined as "the ingrained views based on ignorance or prejudice, that lay behind policies . . . " (p. 248). In the opinion of the Commissioners there are four false assumptions revealed by the policies examined.

1. The first held Aboriginal people to be inherently inferior and incapable of governing themselves.
2. The second was that treaties and other agreements were, by and large, not covenants of trust and obligation but devices of statecraft, less expensive and more acceptable than armed conflict. Treaties were seen as a form of bureaucratic memorandum of understanding, to be acknowledged formally but ignored frequently.

3. The third false assumption was that wardship was appropriate for Aboriginal peoples, so that action deemed for their benefit could be taken without their consent or their involvement in design or implementation.
4. The fourth was the concept of development, whether for the individual or the community, could be defined by non-Aboriginal values alone. This assumption held whether progress was seen as Aboriginal people being civilized and assimilated or, in later times, as resource development and environmental exploitation. (p. 248)

The Royal Commission stated that these false assumptions "still significantly underpin the institutions that drive the federal Aboriginal policy process" (p. 249). These false assumptions, according to the Commissioners (1996a), not only contributed to the abuse of power but "would never have been tolerated had they been imposed on the majority population of the day. . . and what emerged was an abuse of power that was systemic and excessive" (p. 249).

The attributes of the abuse of power as noted by The Royal Commission (1996a) include the

> raw intrusiveness of the instruments of policy used by the state in Aboriginal matters. . . [that] invaded the Aboriginal peoples' lands, traditions, lives, families and homes, with a cradle to grave pervasiveness that other Canadians would have found intolerable if applied to them. . . ; the unimpeded exercise of bureaucratic authority [and] bureaucratic decisions by officials who exercised complete authority over the minutiae of their daily lives over the decades (pp. 249-250).

In addition, the Commissioners pointed out that conventional forms of Canadian democracy, and the subsequent power and authority associated with political institutions, are considered by Aboriginal people to be illegitimate. Aboriginal people of this country "seek nation-to-nation political relations, and these cannot be achieved simply by representation in Canadian political institutions" (p. 249).

CHAPTER 3

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

> Under colonization, hundreds of indigenous nations that were previously autonomous and self-governing suffered a loss of freedom. Even today, the lives of their people are controlled by others. . . . Above all, indigenous nationhood is about reconstructing a power base for the assertion of control over Native land and life (Alfred, 1999, pp. 46-47).

According to Fleras and Elliot (1992), with self-government for Aboriginal peoples in Canada "the bottom line is power. . . . Aboriginal rather than external authority over jurisdictions and institutions of relevance to Aboriginal peoples" (p. 24). The Federal Government Policy Guide, Aboriginal Self-Government (1995) states that "the Government of Canada recognizes the inherent right of self-government as an existing Aboriginal right under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982"* (p. 3).

The concept of self-government is not new, it has always existed with First Nation peoples. At the Federal-Provincial Meeting of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters on April 2, 1985 it was reiterated:

> As Indian First Nations we have an inherent right to govern ourselves. We had this right from time immemorial (ie. centuries before the arrival of the Europeans) and this right exists today. Neither the Crown in the right of the United Kingdom nor of Canada delegated the right to be self-governing to the First Nation. It existed long before Canada was itself a nation. Parliament did not create our right to self-government. (p. 2)

Alfred (1999) supports this and stated that "under colonization, hundreds of indigenous nations that were previously autonomous and self-governing suffered a loss of freedom. Even today, the lives of their people are controlled by others" (p. 46). He further states that "the problems faced by social workers, political scientists, physicians, and teachers can be traced to this power relationship, to the control of Native lives by foreign power (p. 47). The federal government "recognizes that the right of Aboriginal peoples to self-government has always existed and has never been extinguished. (DIAND, September 1995, p. 1) In light of this, according to DIAND (1995) the present government, as part

of its Red Book, *The Liberal Plan for Canada*, has committed to negotiate a new arrangement that "will restore hope and dignity to Aboriginal peoples and strengthen the partnership between them and other Canadians in the context of an evolving federation" (September, 1995, p. 1). Specifically *The Liberal Plan for Canada* states, "the Liberal government will be committed to building a new partnership with Aboriginal peoples that is based on trust, mutual respect, and participation in the decision-making process" (p. 98). In strengthening and renewing this partnership the federal government of Canada will

1. act on the premise that the inherent right of self-government is an existing Aboriginal treaty right,
2. establish a comprehensive consultation process between the government and Aboriginal peoples to remove the present unilateral policy making process,
3. generally wind down the department of Indian Affairs at a pace agreed upon by First Nations while maintaining fiduciary responsibility,
4. achieve a mutually acceptable process to interpret the treaties in contemporary terms while recognizing original intent and spirit,
5. negotiate regional self-government for Inuit living outside of Nunavit, and
6. lead in trilateral negotiations to determine federal responsibility for Metis and off reserve Indians. (Liberal Party of Canada, 1996, p. 98)

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (1997) have stated that all self-government arrangements will be based on the following key principles

1. The inherent right is an existing Aboriginal right recognized and affirmed under the Canadian Constitution.
2. Self-government will be exercised within the existing Canadian Constitution. Canada's recognition of self-government does not mean sovereignty in the international sense. Aboriginal people will continue to be citizens of Canada and the province or territory were they live. However, they may exercise varying degrees of jurisdiction or authority.
3. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* will apply to Aboriginal governments as it does to all other governments in Canada. The current provision of the Charter that respect the unique Aboriginal and treaty rights of Aboriginal peoples will continue to apply.

4. All federal funding for self-government will come from the reallocation of existing resources.
5. Where all parties agree, rights in self-government agreements may be protected in new treaties under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982. They may also be protected through additions to existing treaties, or as part of comprehensive land claims agreements.
6. Federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal laws must work in harmony. Certain laws of overriding federal and provincial importance, such as the Criminal Code, will prevail.
7. The interests of all Canadians will be taken into account as agreements are negotiated. (p. 2)

The resolute intent behind self-government is that members of the Aboriginal First Nation will have at their disposal

> tools they need to make a tangible positive difference in the lives of Aboriginal peoples and enable them to exercise greater control over their lives. . . Aboriginal groups will negotiate the details of self-government in the areas they wish to develop arrangements more suitable to their needs, cultures and values such as health care. child welfare, education, housing and economic development. (DIAND, 1995, p. 1)

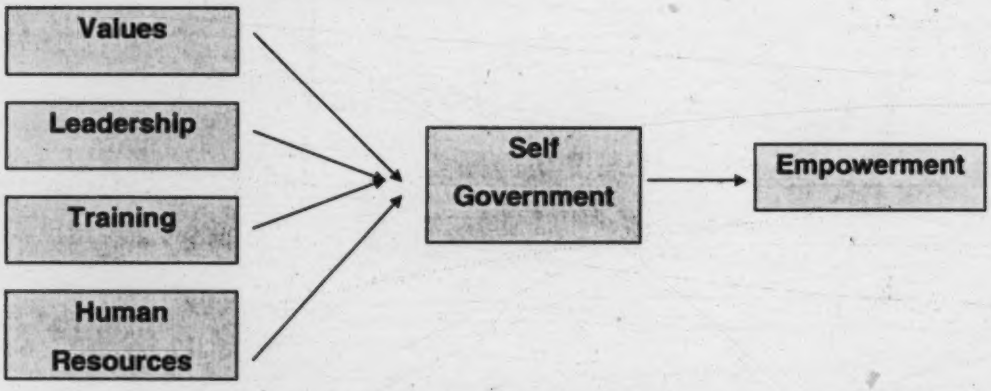
Hylton (1994) suggested that a number of emerging trends may be indicators of a new era in Canada's relationship with Aboriginal people, based on self-government. Specifically he noted the following:

1. The Aboriginal peoples in Canada are increasingly engaged in the practice of self-government in a wide variety of forms, and a number of Aboriginal Nations have already negotiated far-reaching self-government agreements;
2. There has been an expression of very considerable "political will" on the part of Canadian governments;
3. The current federal Liberal government appears more ready than the previous administration to enter into new arrangements with the Aboriginal Peoples;
4. The final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples,. . . will almost certainly fuel the self-government momentum;
5. Public opinion appears supportive of a "new deal" for Canada's Aboriginal Peoples; and

6. The further implementation of self-government arrangements would be consistent with practices that governments are adopting to cope with current political and fiscal realities in Canada and elsewhere. (pp. 235-6)

Nanus (1992) emphasized that the "one word that has become the theme for leadership in the 1990s is empowerment" (p. 18). Empowerment according to Wellins, Byham, and Wilson (1991) is facilitated by a number of factors including values, structure, training, and a reward system (p. 22). A conceptual map shown in Figure 2 helps to illustrate the relationship.

Figure 2 Empowerment Model



(Adapted from Wellins, et al., Empowerment in today's business environment, 1991).

Empowerment requires determined organizational values, secured leadership, training, and a human resources structure that includes sufficiently trained personnel and a system of rewards. If any of the empowering criteria are absent or not adequately developed, then successful empowerment is unlikely. How does this apply to education in Aboriginal communities and what are some of the barriers to empowerment and self-government?

The concept of empowerment raises a number of dilemmas. Self-government has to be recognized as a beginning or an essential start to the empowerment process. Taylor, Crago, and McAlpine (1993) raised a cautionary note when considering empowerment, not from the point of non-support, rather from the point of view that the empowerment process "is but the beginning of a fundamental societal challenge" (p. 182). According to Taylor et al., "most

educators and politicians see empowerment as the end of an important process designed to allow Aboriginal peoples control over their educational destiny" (p. 82). As a result they suggested that "sudden empowerment generates a whole series of dilemmas for Aboriginal communities" (p. 182). These dilemmas could take a variety of forms, but primarily they are in the form of raising of expectations, setting unrealistic expectations on the outcomes of the empowerment process, and shifting the responsibility without putting in place mechanisms needed to ensure success. As Taylor, Crago, and McAlpine (1993), remind us the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is one of subjugation (p. 182). While for the past two decades Aboriginal communities have administered many of their own affairs, it is also understood and well documented, that all aspects of the delivery of services, were to that point, controlled by the dominant society. Unless Bands are given the necessary resources to successfully implement the mandate and intent of self-government, the process could be interpreted as potentially setting up First Nation communities for failure. Such scenarios could potentially interpret empowerment initiatives as just another form of domination. If the communities do not have in place, as illustrated in Figure 2, the empowerment factors of values, leadership structure, training, and the human resources structure, and if the communities do not have the necessary personnel in terms of numbers and expertise to ensure that self-government and subsequent empowerment is successful, then empowerment could be potentially considered as another form of domination.

There are also substantial barriers to self-government initiatives for Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. Hylton (1994) remind us that these barriers include:

1. Constitutional renewal is on the backburner and likely will remain there for the foreseeable future;
2. The country has not yet emerged from a deep recession, and budget deficits have created a mood that is hardly conducive to the establishment of new arrangements with the Aboriginal Peoples;
3. Many Aboriginal communities remain in the grip of desperate social problems wrought by a century of colonialism... they are ill equipped to forge ahead quickly with any new arrangements that would place an

increased burden of responsibility on already overtaxed community leaders;
4. In many respects "self-government" remains an illusive concept... there are many "first order" questions about self-government that have not yet been satisfactorily resolved; and
5. There are still many leaders in non-Aboriginal communities who remain skeptical about self-government (p. 246).

From an educational perspective Taylor et al. (1993) spoke of decision making in Aboriginal schooling, goals of schooling in Aboriginal communities, culture of the school, language of instruction, Aboriginal content, training of Aboriginal teachers, and testing of Aboriginal students as but some of the problem areas Aboriginal communities will have to deal with when assuming self-government and the resultant empowerment. Aboriginal leaders and educators, "no matter how wise, may have little or no experience or expertise in administrative or pedagogical, and educational practice. . . will be called on to make weighty decisions" (Taylor et al. 1993, p. 177). These decisions will not only affect teachers and administrators, but also the educational experience of children in the communities (p. 177). While it may be appropriate that decisions affecting Aboriginal peoples should be made by Aboriginal people, it must also be appreciated that self-government and empowerment can create dilemmas and tensions that will only be resolved with time and appropriate resources. As so astutely stated by Taylor et al., "this recognition is the necessary first step to understanding and responding to these tensions" (p. 177).

As immense as the barriers are to effective self-government, what may be more troublesome for many Aboriginal communities, especially in education, are the questions of how, after years of domination and subjugation, can changes be made to the educational system, to reflect the culture of the community? Partnerships could forestall problems that could naturally arise from subjugation. Partnerships with provincial educational organizations that respect, protect, and guarantee the inherent rights of Aboriginal communities while assisting with requested alternatives and strategies could have a significant positive impact on the development of self-government initiatives in education.

Being able to exercise power and authority over First Nations educational matters by First Nation political and human resource personnel is seen as essential to ensuring the survival of the Aboriginal culture.

Partnerships

For the purpose of this research a distinction must be drawn between a relationship and a partnership, as much is written and spoken of the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and governments and agencies. However, in order to establish viable, workable relationships that accurately reflect the intent of self-government, partnerships based on agreed criteria, must be established.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) pointed out that "cracks in the existing relationship are coming starkly to the fore all across the country, and it should be apparent that trying to preserve the status quo is futile" (p. 4). It is as a result of these cracks, and it is not surprising, according to The Royal Commission (1996b) that Aboriginal peoples are "calling for a complete change in their relationship with the federal and provincial governments to one that recognizes the inherent right of self-government as distinct peoples and as Canada's First People (p. 4). This call for a complete change extends to all relationships and partnerships between any First Nation and government or agency of the government with whom they deal.

A relationship is defined by The Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary (1988) as the "mutual exchange between two peoples or groups who have dealings with one another" (p. 841). Relationships can be imposed, they can be necessitated because of a common interest or because of geography. A relationship, for example, between an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community may be established or even necessitated because of the close proximity of their communities, or because of the availability of natural resources, or because of the need of one to receive supplies and services from the other. What a relationship does not do is define the parameters of the mutual exchange.

Traditionally, and in their infancy, relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples were defined by treaties. Treaties, as noted by the Royal

Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b), were the "mechanism by which both the French and the British Crown in the early days of contact committed themselves to relationships of peaceful coexistence and non-interference with the Aboriginal nations then in sole occupation of the land" (p. 2). Treaties were established using a nation-to-nation rationale as the basis of the relationship. The French and the British Crown "recognized the Aboriginal Nations as self-governing entities with their own systems of laws and governance and agreed to respect them as such" (p. 2), for centuries. This relationship continued for centuries and treaties, as noted by the Royal Commission (1996b), "continued to be the traditional method of defining intergovernmental relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples living side by side on the same land" (p. 2). This is still the method preferred by the Aboriginal people today, and it is this base to a relationship that has to be renewed in order to effectively construct partnerships. Dr. Eber Hampton, President, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, in an address to the Grande Prairie Regional College Teacher Symposium on November 26, 1997, spoke of partnerships in a similar fashion. He contended, "the question is not the development of partnerships as they are already there. We are partners. It may be that the partnerships are deemed inhibited or dysfunctional, but they are there. The real question is then the quality of the partnership."

What is necessary then in order to establish mutually acceptable and effective partnerships? According to Dr. James Tulley, advisor to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, in an address at the University of Alberta, on February 25, 1997, titled "Visions of the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Royal Commission described partnerships as

> relationships that are based on negotiations amongst equals like the old treaty relationships. That is to say relationships that are worked out on the basis of nation-to-nation negotiations amongst equals who reach agreements by means of consent on both sides and no subordination on either side. And, at the end of that negotiation process whatever the relationship or partnership worked out, whether it is a formal treaty or a less formal agreement of some kind, that agreement is binding on both sides. Both sides are mutually subject to the relationship that has been worked out through negotiations under these conditions of equality on a

> nation-to-nation basis. Each side coming in negotiating in their own terms and ways trying to reach agreement on planned use or. . . but the key condition is no subordination. They are standing on a nation-to-nation basis.

In summary, any new relationship must be based on a partnership that embodies the original principles of the treaties. That is, a relationship based on a mechanism committed to a nation-to-nation, non-interference, non-subordinate, mutually respectful, equal partnership.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

Data Collection Procedures

> Another guy comes around and wants to know about Indians, writes a book, and again there is nothing in it for the Indian. I've been through it. (Elder, personal interview)

There were three distinct First Nation groups and one provincial organization of interest to this study: (a) Band controlled, on reserve First Nation schools; (b) First Nation educational authorities which purchase educational services from provincial jurisdictions via tuition agreements; (c) First Nations who have off reserve membership attending provincial schools; and (d) the provincial department of education.

Data were gathered primarily from two sources. Interviews and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with First Nation political leaders and educational personnel to determine

1. Perceived issues in First Nations' education,
2. desired partnership relationship,
3. provincial educational authority involvement,
4. provincial educational institution involvement,
5. federal government involvement,
6. desired relationships with other authorities and institutions,
7. potential tuition agreements formats,
8. benefits of a partnership for both the First Nation and the province,
9. expectations of a partnership.

Interviews were conducted with provincial educational personnel to determine:

1. levels of provincial support for the concept of partnerships,
2. levels of First Nations' support for the concept of partnerships,
3. areas of potential provincial support and involvement,

4. negotiation route and who should initiate, and
5. areas that could be potentially problematic for the province in reaching a partnership agreement.

Legislation, regulations, briefs, agreements, federal and provincial government publications, and Northland School Division No.61 Board meeting minutes were the primary source of the documents reviewed to extract information to identify political and legal areas of concern, and the extent to which legislation supports or permits partnerships. Documents reviewed included, but were not limited to:

1. the Alberta *School Act*,
2. the Indian Act,
3. self governance legislation,
4. tuition agreements,
5. minutes from the Commons Committee on Aboriginal Affairs,
6. Assembly of First Nation publications,
7. individual band initiatives,
8. provincial education regulations, and
9. federal education regulations.

Specific Research Question

What form of governance structure and legislation is perceived to have the potential to successfully facilitate and enable the development of educational partnerships between First Nations and provincial educational authorities without diminishing previously secured treaty and constitutional rights?

General Research Questions

1. What mechanisms are essential to support First Nation control?
2. What are the educational issues facing First Nations' education systems and their communities?
3. What support mechanisms are provided by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development?

4. Is there still a desire among First Nation communities to have a working relationship with the Federal government in the area of education?
5. Is there a desire among First Nation communities to enter into partnership agreements with the provincial government or any of its educational authorities?
6. What areas in the operation of First Nation schools should remain under the full authority of the Nation?
7. In the view of the First Nations, how are provincial schools fulfilling their educational mandate with First Nation students?
8. How do First Nation organizations visualize educational partnerships with the province?
9. What are the expectations First Nations will place on any partnership agreement?
10. What are the perceived benefits of an educational partnership with the province for First Nations?

Participants

According to Rudestam and Newton (1992), selecting "the appropriate number of subjects for a research design is one of the most difficult sampling problems" (p. 64). Initially, interviews were conducted with three people with educational backgrounds and three persons holding elected political positions with the responsibility for the delivery of educational services to Aboriginal children. These personnel included: Directors of education, principals of Band controlled schools, and Superintendents of provincial jurisdictions offering educational services to Aboriginal children. Also it was appropriate to interview Chiefs or Councillors, and in particular Band personnel holding Education portfolios. In order to ascertain the provincial perspective interviews were

conducted with senior educational officials from Alberta Education[1]. "Elders" were interviewed to attempt to garner a more traditional and historical perspective. Throughout the interview process all participants were asked to identify other individuals they thought could provide pertinent information to this study.

The Constructivist Approach

Constructivists, according to Schwandt (1994), "share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (p. 118). Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested a constructivist paradigm that Schwandt described as "a wide-ranging eclectic framework [because, as acknowledged by Guba and Lincoln] constructivist, interpretive, naturalistic, and hermeneutical are all similar notions" (p. 128). The constructivists, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) assume that what is real is a construction in the minds of the individual (p. 83). This is echoed by Pauls (1996) who described the constructivist paradigm by saying "that there is no independent reality and that individuals are responsible for creating their own reality from their perceptions of situations (p. 30). Constructivists are deeply committed to the view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of this perspective. Knowledge and truth to the constructivist, according to Schwandt, are created, not discovered by the mind (p. 125). This is contrary to the objectivist as described by Knorr-Cetina (1981), who believe that "the world is composed of facts and the goal of knowledge is to provide a literal account of what the world is like (p. 1).

In conducting research constructivists are involved with the participants. They believe that knowledge and truth are created in interactions between investigator and respondent (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). According to Schwandt

---

[1] With government reorganization in 1999, Alberta Education and the Department of Advanced Education and Training were merged to form Alberta Learning. However, during the time this study was conducted, the relevant government department was Alberta Education and consequently this term has generally been maintained throughout the thesis.

(1994), Guba and Lincoln based this statement on their belief that the "observer cannot (should not) be neatly disentangled from the observed in the activity of inquiring into constructions (p. 128). Prior to the beginning of this research project and during the study I was involved in negotiations with two separate First Nations. The end result of these negotiations were two separate and distinct operational tuition agreements, reflecting the direction set by the First Nations, with a provincial school jurisdiction.

According to Steier (1991), in modern organizational research, there is a strong trend toward considering the research process as cooperative ventures between the researchers and their hosts (p. 106). The advantage of such an approach is that the research can be put to use by the hosts and it should leave the host in an improved position. Thus the knowledge "obtained in the research process does not reside exclusively in the researcher's mind" (p. 106). The purpose of research becomes one of leaving participants in an improved position with new knowledge to do with what they believe is best for their particular situation.

Analytical Procedures

As previously discussed, data and information were drawn from two primary sources, documents and interviews. The procedure for document analysis was straightforward. Selected documents were reviewed, using deductive thematic analysis, for reference to Aboriginal education.

The interviews required a two-phase process. Phase one consisted of individual interviews with identified respondents at a location of their choice. Their place of residence or business and the University provided the most convenient locations. Phase two required that the researcher return to meet with individuals interviewed to share interview transcripts and validate all data, perceptions, and understandings held by the researcher as a result of the interview.

All interviews were tape recorded. If any individual or individual in the group objected to being audio taped then copious notes were taken during the

interview by the researcher. For audio taped interviews a transcript was prepared. Transcripts were reviewed for commonality of categories and themes. It was through this identification of categories and themes combined with a review of all relevant documentation, that partnership models were constructed.

Pilot Study

The primary purpose of the pilot study was to test the questions formulated for this research project. Three individuals who, in the opinion of the researcher, were knowledgeable in the areas of First Nation and provincial education and political structures and federal government departments, were approached to participate in this pilot study. Pilot study participants were asked to draw upon their past political and educational experiences and reflect critically on the questions I presented them. The critical approach is necessary in order to determine the usability of the interview question. (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 68). Specifically the participants were asked to rate the questions on clarity, possible interpretations, language level, focus, and their overall applicability to the research topic. In addition to the critical approach, respondents were also asked to formulate questions that they considered might be essential to gathering the information sought and to suggest other individuals I might wish to interview. Based on the response received from the pilot test participants, necessary adjustments were made to the research instrument and the list of participants.

Goodness Criteria

As Guba and Lincoln (1989) pointed out, the goodness criteria "are themselves rooted in the assumptions of the paradigm for which they are designed; one cannot expect positivist criteria to apply in any sense to constructivist studies" (p. 236). What criteria then can be used in a constructivist inquiry? Lincoln and Guba (1989), who set out to develop a parallel to the positivists criteria of external validity, internal validity, reliability, and objectivity; substituted the constructivist criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability for judging adequacy.

Credibility

According to Guba and Lincoln (1989) the credibility criterion is parallel to internal validity. Credibility is ensured by establishing a "match between the constructed realities of respondents (or stockholders) and those realities as represented by the evaluator and attributed to various stockholders" (p. 237). To increase the probability that a similar structure will be verified, thus lending to the credibility, they suggest the following techniques: (a) prolonged engagement to establish the trust and build the rapport necessary to uncover constructions, (b) persistent observation to enable the evaluator to identify the most significant and relevant characteristics and elements of the problem or issue being pursued, (c) peer debriefing or the process of engaging a knowledgeable outsider to discuss the findings; negative case analysis to revise hypotheses with the intent of developing or refining your hypotheses, (d) progressive subjectivity to monitor the evaluator's own developing construction, and, (e) member checks to test hypotheses, interpretations, data, and preliminary categories with the stockholders (pp. 237-239).

The credibility criterion, internal validity for naturalistic inquiry, was safeguarded by a variety of means. My long association with Aboriginal educators in Alberta has built a mutual trust and respect and, as a result, has opened many doors in the First Nation community. This rapport allowed me both access to necessary communities and personnel and also access to information that comprehensively reflected the educational opinions of First Nation political and educational personnel. This association, an awareness of the culture, and the knowledge taught me by Aboriginal people, also enabled me to interpret the constructions and the elements of the research question responses. As confident as I was in this rapport, all responses were personally returned to the respondents for a check of the information they provided. When this accuracy check was completed my interpretation of the responses were also discussed with the respondents. The intent of this step was to ensure that what I wrote or reported accurately reflected their intent. To ensure that my interpretations were correct and accurately reflected an Aboriginal perspective a second accuracy

check was completed. For this I relied on two close associates who are of Aboriginal descent and have been, and continue to be, extensively involved in Aboriginal education. All findings and my interpretation of responses were referred to these associates individually.

What was forefront in my mind was the reality of the difficulties associated with cross-cultural communication. The use of associates and the return of all responses collected to the respondents assisted with this concern. In addition to this, and as a further method of ensuring both accurate cross cultural communication as well as credibility, all data, interpretations, and hypotheses, were relayed to all respondents as the research project progressed. This process allowed all respondents to be aware of any changes and developments as the research progressed. Respondents were at these times asked to respond to the information provided.

Transferability

Guba and Lincoln (1989) draw parallels between transferability and external validity or generalizability (p. 241). In making transferability judgments it is incumbent on the researcher to "set out all the working hypotheses for this study, and to provide an extensive and careful description of the time, the place, the context, the culture in which those hypotheses were found salient" (pp. 241-242). As this research focused primarily on model development, the onus is shifted to school jurisdictions to determine whether they have a similar situation, context, or culture, and to assess applicability to their particular situation. This determination can be accomplished through interpretation of descriptions of the study setting and review of the participant profile.

Dependability

Guba and Lincoln (1989) tell us that dependability parallels reliability and concerns itself "with the stability of data over a period of time" (p. 242). As in the positivist inquiry mode, any change or alteration in the design of a study can leave the findings and reliability suspect and open to question. The very nature

of a naturalist's methodology often causes changes in the methodology. With constructivist research, the researcher is often required to reassess and restructure the original idea of the design as the study progresses. As a result of this, Pauls (1996) stated, "it would be virtually impossible for any researcher to duplicate the findings of another constructivist researcher" (p. 46). As noted by Guba and Lincoln (1989), in order to ensure dependability "changes and shifts need to be tracked and trackable" (p. 242). To accomplish this they suggest a dependability audit (p. 242). A dependability audit can be assured, according to Guba and Lincoln (1981) by establishing an audit trail [that] takes the form of documentation (the actual interview notes taken, for example) and a running account of the process (as in the form of an investigator's daily journal) (p. 87). Rudestam and Newton (1992) concurred. They encouraged this practice by recommending

> the use of tape recorders to record interviews and place little reliance on the use of field notes. . . the use of a diary or journal to record impressions, reactions, and other significant events that may occur during the data collection phase of the research. . . . (p. 76)

To ensure dependability and the credibility of the data and the subsequent analysis, all interviews were recorded electronically and then transcribed. Transcripts were returned to participants for confirmation of accuracy. Interpretation, changes and all writings were returned to and reviewed with participants, again to ensure accuracy. Should other researchers wish to assess the rigor of this research a complete audit trail is available.

Confirmability

Confirmability is closely related to dependability and is parallel in perspective to the positivist notion of objectivity. Confirmability is "concerned with assuring that data, interpretations, and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and are not simply figments of the evaluator's imagination" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, pp. 242-3). The technique Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested for ensuring confirmability is a confirmability audit, "data (facts, figures, and constructions) can all be traced to original

sources, and the process by which they were converted to the bottom line. . . can be confirmed" (p. 243). Confirmability is to ensure that the biases, interests, motivations, or perspectives of the researcher are objective and neutral and that the findings of the research are, in reality, determined by the participants.

Assumptions

1. It is assumed that many First Nation communities desire to enter into partnerships with provincial education authorities. This assumption is based on personal conversations with First Nation educators.
2. It is assumed that as an educator I can see the benefit of educational partnerships to the extent that I believe it is educationally advantageous to both the province and First Nation communities to explore this option. However it is recognized that many First Nations may not share this same view.
3. It is assumed that because of my educational background and experience I believe that First Nations should have full authority over educational services.

Limitations of the Study

1. The provincial government is not in any way legally bound to consider educational partnerships with Band controlled schools, as First Nation education is a federal responsibility.
2. The primary selection of interviewees was based on personal contacts. Although attempts were make via interviewees to identify further contacts it is recognized that there may be many experienced and informed educators and politicians who were not contacted.
3. Individual viewpoints may not accurately reflect the view of a community. Views of provincial and national associations of First Nations were sought. However, it is recognized that as full autonomy rests with the community, decisions regarding partnerships will be the prerogative of individual communities. Political perspectives as well as educational perspectives will shape the findings of this study.

4. My 23 years of service with an Aboriginal jurisdiction which could potentially benefit from this research, and my ties to this jurisdiction, may influence participants' perception as well as my own.
5. My long association with Aboriginal people, and the appreciation I have for what they have taught me potentially influenced my interpretation of findings.

Delimitations

1. The study focused only on First Nation communities and their members.
2. Information was obtained through interviews and document review.
3. I primarily concerned myself with First Nation community members involved in the delivery of educational services and educational administrators in the province of Alberta.
4. This study focused primarily on Reserve communities and their membership, including off reserve members. Metis communities were not a focus group even though Metis politicians and educators were consulted, as it is believed that the findings of this study could have considerable impact on the future direction of Metis education.
5. This study focused on First Nations who were predisposed, or clearly not opposed, to a partnership or an agreement.

Ethical Considerations

The author recognizes the sensitivity of research in Aboriginal communities caused by years of study in which Aboriginal people played subordinate roles. In recognition of this sensitivity the following procedures and considerations were observed. Informed permission was sought. Permission from the political leaders of the communities was the first step of this process. This step was taken to ensure that the community considered the research to be of value to Aboriginal people. All participants were provided with information about the purpose and nature of the research activity. This information included potential benefit and reward to the community as well as the personal and professional risks to the participants. Participants were able to remove themselves at any time from this research project. Those willing to participate in

the study were assured that their names would not be linked particular viewpoint and therefore, guaranteed confidentially. However it was held at that time, and it still is held, that the confidentially risks, because of the nature of the study, were minimal. The research was collaborative. Procedures were established to ensure that community members, via their political representatives, were able to participate in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the results. Prior to each interview a pre-conference was held to review the purpose of the study and to arrange such matters as interview location, a follow-up conference to review findings and check the accuracy of any findings, and sharing and publication of the final report in the community. It was believed that these procedures would guarantee that the study was conducted in an ethical, appropriate fashion.

In addition all ethical criteria required by the University of Alberta were strictly adhered to in this research.

CHAPTER 5

PROTOCOL

> Any research that advances the case of understanding the perspectives of First Nation peoples is invaluable. In these days of violent confrontations between non-aboriginal people and First Nations, the basic misunderstanding is always a cultural conflict - a clash of perspectives or worldview. There is a dire need to be open to understanding and respecting the aboriginal perspective, and since there has been so little published for/about First Nations' experience and ways of knowing, any research that supports this is welcome (Mary Cardinal-Collins, 1999).

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples–Ethical Guidelines for Research

There has been significant research and publications on Aboriginal peoples, and Aboriginal peoples often hold that they have been studied to death. As a result, Aboriginal organizations and peoples are often suspicious about the research conducted and insist on certain research guidelines and standards. Recognizing such concerns as common to Aboriginal peoples, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples established Ethical Guidelines for Research to guide the manner in which the Commission conducted its own research (1993).

The ethical guidelines for research on Aboriginal peoples were developed to ensure that "in all research sponsored by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, appropriate respect is given to the cultures, languages, knowledge and values of Aboriginal peoples, and to the standards used by Aboriginal peoples to legitimate knowledge" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1993, p. 37). The Commission realized that Aboriginal communities, as with any culture, have distinctive perspectives, which are not often understood, or correctly interpreted, and often deliberately ignored when groups from outside the culture conduct research. The Commission (1993) also recognized that in the past "research concerning aboriginal peoples has usually been initiated outside the Aboriginal community and carried out by non-Aboriginal personnel" (p. 37). Such research may not reflect cultural, linguistic, historical, or spiritual accuracy and more often

than not, as noted by the Commission, "aboriginal peoples have had almost no opportunity to correct [this] misinformation or to challenge ethnocentric and racist interpretations" (p. 37). The Commission also recognized the oral tradition of the Aboriginal culture and acknowledged that this was a "valuable resource along with documentary and other sources" (p. 37).

With these principles, the Royal Commission (1993) then established guidelines and questions that must be observed and consciously addressed by any researcher conducting research sponsored by the Commission.

- Are there perspectives on the subject of inquiry that are distinctively Aboriginal?
- What Aboriginal sources are appropriate to shed light on those perspectives?
- Is proficiency in an Aboriginal language required to explore these perspectives and sources?
- Are there particular protocols or approaches required to access the relevant knowledge?
- Does Aboriginal knowledge challenge in any way assumptions brought to the subject from previous research?
- How will Aboriginal knowledge or perspectives portrayed in research products be validated? (p. 38)

In addition to these guidelines, the Commission, in recognizing other criteria of ethics in research, addressed consent, collaborative research, review procedures, access to results, and community benefit.

The Commission (1993) qualifies the term "consent" by referring to it as "informed consent." The Commission noted "such consent may be given by individuals whose personal experience is being portrayed, by groups in assembly, or by authorized representatives of communities or organizations" (p. 38). Addressing the essential ethical problem and ensuring the moral and ethical acceptability of their research, the guidelines indicate that those participating "shall be provided with information about the purpose and nature of the research activities, including expected benefits and risks" (p. 39).

Participants can remove themselves from the research endeavor at any time. The degree of confidentially which will apply in this particular study must also be made clear to the participants.

In addressing collaborative research the Commission (1993) draws comparative differences between studies located in principally aboriginal communities, studies that are carried out in the general community, and community based studies. In the community, which is principally Aboriginal, collaborative procedures that will enable community members to participate in the planning, execution, and evaluation of results should be established by the researcher. For studies carried out in the general community, and which are likely to have an impact on Aboriginal communities, a consultation process should be established to address planning, execution, and evaluation. In community based studies the researcher is to ensure a cross representation of community experiences and perception (p. 39). Access to results is considered an open policy in the Commission's guidelines and all reports are open to public access. The only exception to this policy is where the protection of individual rights and confidentially may be violated. In these case "research reports ... shall not be published where there are reasonable grounds for thinking that publication will violate the privacy of individuals or cause significant harm to participating Aboriginal communities or organizations" (p. 39). Where results are to be published then distribution is to be wide, especially in Aboriginal communities, and efforts are to be made to present the results in non technical and Aboriginal languages where applicable. This of course addresses the "Fair Return" criterion.

Community benefit is another significant component of the ethical criteria to considered. If the proposed research is acceptable then the researcher and the study community will establish a bond of support and trust that will ultimately benefit both. Such a bond will address trustworthiness, open participant involvement, co-researcher partnerships, and most importantly, ensure reliable informants and reliable, valid, and culturally acceptable data. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples have taken significant steps in addressing

what a great number considered to be many years of culturally biased research that has damaged the social fabric of Aboriginal peoples as well as portraying a negative image to the larger society which has created stereotypical images almost impossible to erase.

But what about research that is not sponsored or initiated by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, what sorts of ethical research criteria have been established to guarantee the levels of confidentially, honesty, responsibility, and fair return as espoused by naturalistic inquiry and the Royal Commission?

Draft Code of Conduct for Research Involving Humans

The draft Code of Conduct for Research Involving Humans (1996) was prepared by the Tri Council Working Group, consisting of representatives from The Medical Research Council of Canada, The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This code of conduct was developed, by the Tri Council (1996), to help researchers, boards, administrators of institutions "develop and maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in research involving humans" (p. ix). In addition, new ethical concepts have arisen in the past decade that requires new standards. Of interest to this discussion are the code's application to research on Aboriginal peoples and whether or not the levels of ethical standards discussed and practiced by the Royal Commission are maintained by the Tri-Council document. In other words how are the minimum ethical criteria of confidentially, honesty, responsibility, and fair return addressed, and is respect for cultural, language, and spiritual differences maintained and protected?

Privacy and confidentially are dealt with in Section 6 of the draft. The Tri Council (1996) considers confidentially to be a "fundamental [value] in Canadian society" (p. 6.1). In order to safeguard this fundamental value the onus is placed on the researcher to safeguard the confidentially of information collected. It is further stated that it is implied that "researchers will take appropriate safeguards

to prevent the identification of an individual or collective unless prior informed consent is obtained for the release of information" (p. 6.2).

Honesty and responsibility are addressed primarily in Section 5 of the draft. This issue the Tri Council (1996) considers to be "at the heart of research involving humans subjects" (p. 5.1). In total, 21 Articles give detailed guidance on appropriate ways of securing informed consent, and the Council further stresses that these articles are not to be considered a simple checklist which would guarantee that free and informed consent has been obtained. Rather it is stressed that the spirit of the articles be followed as well. Researchers, when recruiting, must ensure that the subjects are clearly advised of the nature of the research and are given time to reflect on their participation. Subjects should not be recruited out of convenience nor are subjects with characteristics that could disadvantage their autonomy in recruitment decisions. Further, in order to secure informed consent the researcher must convey to all potential subjects: a) a clear indication they are being invited to participate and why; b) a statement of purpose including the sponsors, duration of the research, and the possibility of commercialization; c) a description of foreseeable harms or benefits; d) information about alternative procedures, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject; e) information about who will have access to the information and a detailed explanation of how confidentially will be protected, and an explanation of how data will be used; f) an assurance that subjects will have access to all new information obtained in the course of the research; g) the name of a contact person available to discuss the nature of the study; h) a guarantee of withdrawal from the research project at any time; i) information about the circumstances under which a researcher may terminate a subject's involvement; j) information on costs and compensation for the research subjects; and, k) a statement guaranteeing the subject that consent does not waive rights other than those specified in the consent form (p. 5.2-5.3). In summary, all information necessary in order to make a well-informed decision must be provided the subject in advance.

Fair return is addressed in a somewhat different fashion by the Tri Council (1996) in that it draws a distinction between incentives for participation and incentives to participate. It is expected that subjects will not be enticed through promises of reward, and it is not acceptable either that subjects "be expected to subsidize research by suffering monetary or other losses" (p. 10.1).

Conflict of interest may arise for any number of reasons. For the purpose of the draft code a conflict of interest is defined by the Tri Council (1996) as "a situation in which a researcher has or appears to have a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his [her] professional judgment towards his/her official duties" (p. 9.1). This definition covers three key points. A personal or private interest that gives the researcher an advantage; a personal or private interest that may influence the researcher's obligation towards a sponsor, or an institution, a professional association, particular subjects or the public at large; or a conflict that removes or interferes with the researcher's objectivity (p. 9.1). In efforts to control conflict the researcher is encouraged to declare as far as possible all relevant personal conflicts and potential conflicts. What must be remembered is that any association of conflict between the researcher and the research will jeopardize the validity and trustworthiness of the research findings.

In addressing the uniqueness of research in a cross-cultural setting the Tri Council makes mention of research involving Aboriginal peoples. Specifically the Tri Council (1996) included Aboriginal peoples and communities as part of collectives; "population groups with social structures, common customs, and an acknowledged leadership" (p. 13.1). Recognizing this, it is expected that researchers will follow the articles of the code of conduct respecting collectives when dealing with aboriginal peoples. The Tri Council considers two basic principles when dealing with collectives: a) treat the host collective with respect and dignity, and, b) protect the members of the collective and the collective itself from harm. Where this is not possible then the collective must be informed of all possible harms (p. 13.3). With these two basic ethical principles the Tri Council then set standards for ethical research with collectives that includes; consent;

making certain that the collectives are aware of all aspects of the research; an insistence that the researcher understand and observe the protocols of conduct and communication of a particular collective; that the collective has an opportunity to participate in the design of the research project, and be given an opportunity to respond the before the completion of final report; that the research with collectives be actualized as a partnership and that credit for ownership is ensured; that the researcher ensure that cultural differences are not used to exploit the collective; that research not be clandestine and that inconveniences be kept to a minimum; and finally, where ambiguities or conflicts arise it is incumbent on the researcher to state how they intend to resolve them. In any case where these ethical guidelines are not being followed the researcher has to provide a rationale explaining why (p. 13.2-13.9).

The response received by the Tri Council to their suggestions and handling of the issue of research on Aboriginal people and in Aboriginal communities, was not entirely supportive. In particular the Canadian Association of University Teachers (1996) (CAUT) while recognizing the Tri Council for "trying to deal with the problems that have arisen in anthropological research in indigenous communities" raised some essential issues and called on the Tri Council to reconsider their stand on research in Aboriginal communities (p. 2). In particular the CAUT was concerned with the Tri Council applying the "collective" articles to aboriginal communities. Specifically the CAUT felt that stand on "collectives" should be eliminated as it has a potential "to obliterate or sanitize public policy research of a critical nature" (p. 7) because, according to Article 13.6, the view of the leadership of the collective is absolutely and finally determining (p. 3). Thus if the leadership felt that a study on their "collective" could be negative then they would be within their right to veto any research on them. The leadership concept is also potentially divisive in smaller Aboriginal communities. Determining whether the leadership is political or family group oriented and supporting one over the other can lead to conflicts in the community or between the researcher and the community. Following their position on

"collectives" the CAUT recommends separate documents to deal with research involving Aboriginal peoples.

The placing of all Aboriginal research under the "collective" umbrella is potentially troublesome. Of primary concern is the liberal view held by the Tri Council and delegated to the researcher. Explicit throughout the document are qualifying and contextual statements that consistently shift the responsibility for ethical considerations to the researcher. Thus a community not well versed in research ethics must still be protected against unethical practices. Short of having their own Research Ethics Board, which is not practical, this leaves a community open to the same research concerns of the past. The Tri Council (1996) document is not a legislated, legally binding set of standards. Rather it is "merely a blueprint, checklist or a recipe to be followed.... it provides an opportunity for a researcher to think through, re-evaluate and engage in resolving ethical issues respecting research with collectives" (p. 13.10). The CAUT suggestion to the Tri Council to follow the lead taken by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People's research guidelines is professionally sound and desirable.

The Researcher's Perspective

From a researcher's perspective what are some of the basic ethical considerations, in addition to the usual ethical guidelines, that should be examined prior to deciding on research in an Aboriginal community? For the purposes of this examination I will list what I consider to be some of the key questions that I, as a potential researcher, would have to examine:

1. How does a researcher gain access to an Aboriginal community?
2. Is the research or findings of value to the community?
3. Is the research for or on Aboriginal people?
4. Is the research collaborative?
5. Does it leave the community in a position to use the results to improve their present situation?
6. What follow-up will be required to ensure that the community realizes this benefit?

7. What are the researcher's commitments to the community?
8. What are the researcher's commitments to the culture?
9. What are the researcher's commitments to scientific enquiry?
10. What is necessary for you, as the researcher, to demonstrate that you are not carrying past colonial luggage, or if you are how, are you attempting to control it?
11. Is my area of research an area that should be addressed by an Aboriginal person only?
12. Does the research lend itself to involvement of community members?
13. How should the cross-cultural situations encountered be resolved and who will interpret these situations?
14. How do you ensure that you have obtained permission from the necessary individuals, both political and family?
15. What are the protocols necessary to access the knowledge required for your study?
16. How do you ensure the authenticity of your informants?
17. How do you ensure what you are told is factual?
18. Does the final product reflect Aboriginal values, and how do I ensure this?
19. Are my research objectives realistic or are they unnecessarily raising expectations?
20. As a result of the research what potential tensions are created within the community?
21. Am I prepared not to publish if the community I am working with is not in agreement with my findings?

While it is recognized that such questions are applicable not only to research in Aboriginal communities, it is realized that these issues are amplified in a cross-cultural situation. How then, as a researcher, is one able to address these questions appropriately?

Suggestions

Researchers should not hesitate to venture into Aboriginal communities to conduct research. In fact I believe that the personal rewards and benefits to anyone who undertakes such a task are tremendous. The opportunity to experience another's viewpoint and culture are usually enriching. However before endeavoring to learn from another, and before you seek to impinge on another's time and space and venture into another culture, it is my premise that one should satisfy all ethical and moral doubts and have, beforehand, satisfied all personal questions and community queries. If done in advance, then the researcher has a greater chance of accomplishing what he or she set out to do. What steps can a researcher take to try and increase the likelihood of this happening?

Access to the community is best gained through a community contact, preferably a friend. Without someone to vouch for your integrity and open the doors of trust then your research potential is limited. Most Aboriginal communities, because of the subordinate role played in many past studies, are particular about who has access to what, and how much support they are prepared to lend to an individual or project. Thus the first issue to address as the researcher is the level of potential support you are likely to obtain. This requires a considerable personal risk because you reputation will be put to a test.

Of primary importance to the Aboriginal community is the assurance that the research you are about to conduct is of value to the community. This of course arises from the negative experiences of past research, which ranged from abuse to a misinterpretation of cultural norms and values. In efforts to avoid doubt and misunderstandings, a researcher has to ensure that the project is both understood and approved by the community. Related directly to this, and a point that could be used as a criterion for determining value to a community, is the question of, whether or not the community will be left with new knowledge and in a position to improve a present situation? The concept of new knowledge and community benefit can be realized if a mechanism is put in place initially that will ensure follow-up once the project is complete. Too often research journals or

the bureaucrat's file is the resting place for study findings, and constructive follow-up is often not carried out. Such follow-up, to promote and attempt to realize a benefit to the community, is not a required ethical criterion but it is a necessary one. Also necessary for researchers is, for lack of a better term, self-examination of the commitment to and the reason for the research project. This in turn relates to your commitment to the culture and to the community. Quite often members of a culture foreign to you will not respond in a fashion you are used to, nor in a time frame you desire. The ability to accept differences will be a measure of your commitment. An equally important measure of commitment is your flexibility. Working within another culture is potentially time consuming for two reasons. Firstly, as someone new to the culture you will spend considerably more time verifying findings, and secondly, it will be necessary for you to spend time setting up interviews and learning and recognizing the various groupings in a community. Normally such observations would be more immediate in a familiar institution or community. Getting to know a community, working within its parameters, as well as the benefit of the research to the community will all be a measure of one's commitment to the community and the culture.

Tensions created as a result of your research or the potential conflicts and tensions between you and the community have to be considered. Possible tensions include: a potential for you to misrepresent the community because of the fact you are not of that community nor of that culture; the possibility that you may have different interpretations and conclusions; the potential to be perceived as colonial, or just another bureaucrat; you may run the risk of jeopardizing your reputation, if well known, because of community expectations conflicting with your professional knowledge. Whatever the potential conflicts a researcher will have to explore all possibilities.

I would expect that involvement with the community is essential to a successful endeavor in an Aboriginal community. Involvement will break down barriers of uncertainty, open you to new informants, help you realize more input, build trust, and ensure culturally accurate information. As a result projects that are participative or action oriented in nature, those that involve the community,

those that transfer ownership and empower are the research projects that should be initiated.

In *The Unjust Society* Harold Cardinal states:

> Non-Indians have no business trying to organize the Indian people. Such would-be helpers go into Indian communities with predetermined and, inevitably, mistaken conclusions about problems and solutions...They have struck out before they take the field. Cultural differences are magnified by their approach. It will take many years of practical experience before the white man can comprehend fully the deep differences in the values of the Indians and those of middle-class Canadians. (1969, p. 93)

Deciding on research in aboriginal communities is more than an exercise in ethical considerations. As a researcher how do you "maximize the good, minimize the harm, pursue the truth, and [have] respect for persons" (Clark, 1995, p. 2). What is morally right? Such considerations are basic to qualitative research in Aboriginal communities. Research in Aboriginal communities should be research "with" rather than "on" Aboriginal peoples. Any research should be acceptable to and approved by the community and all results should be shared with and written in a style and form acceptable to and understandable to the community, and no findings should be published without approval of those researched. Any decision to research should also be based on benefit for Aboriginal peoples as defined by them.

As long as research findings appear to benefit the researcher and not the community and findings are reserved for academic research journals then research should not be considered ethically acceptable. Until such time as members of the Aboriginal community occupy positions in professions responsible for and able to conduct necessary research and interpret findings, and until such time as the community approves and benefits from the findings, then these basic moral and ethical criteria should be considered very carefully before research is considered. Such an approach will help address the concern raised by Cardinal (1969) and reflected by many Aboriginal people.

The ethical responsibility in research then, as suggested by Cové (1995) "is to empower [aboriginal peoples] who have been historically subordinate" (p. 198).

CHAPTER 6

LEGISLATION

> If the wealth of our homelands is equitably shared with us, and if there is no forced interference in our way of life, we could fully regain and exercise our traditional capacity to govern. . . (Vice-Chief John McDonald, Prince Albert Tribal Council).

In this chapter I will discuss legislation, policy and agreements that lend themselves to establishing partnerships with First Nation governments and provincial education authorities. By way of introduction to this chapter it should be noted that the majority of the legislation and policy presented is provincial. Pauls (1996) in his examination of legislation pertaining to Indian education noted that this was the situation for two reasons.

> First, few of the various First Nation organizations whether they are at the individual First Nation level, the Tribal Council level or the provincial wide Indian organization level, have developed clear policies concerning the relationship between First Nation schools and the province. Second, where such policies do exist, the province wide Indian organizations are in a difficult position. These organizations exist in an advisory capacity and they do not have the authority to dictate to their member First Nations educational or other policy. (p. 111)

These factors should not be construed as negative in any aspect. In fact the opposite is true. The non-imposition of policy by the federal government and First Nation provincial wide organizations can be seen as recognition of the right to self-government and self-determination. In addition, this non-imposition lends itself to the development of varied agreements. The potential is present to develop agreements that reflect the particular needs and wants of a community rather than develop agreements based on a federal or provincial organizational model initiated or mandated by policy.

Many First Nation communities in Alberta are operating their own schools and are utilizing the Alberta curriculum. This, as noted earlier when discussing the need for this study, is as a direct result of Federal funding arrangements with individual First Nations that require, among other things, Band operated schools

to follow the curriculum of the province, to have certified teachers for direct instruction, and which contain an expressed expectation that students complete provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations. Such arrangements highlight the need for established relationships and partnerships with provincial authorities.

School Act and Regulations

Division 2 of the Alberta *School Act* (1988)) "Operation and Management", mandates the process required by a Board of Trustees to enter into an agreement and lists those with whom a Board may enter into an agreement. As it relates to First Nations, Section 46, subsection (2), parts (i) and (ii) states:

> A Board may, with the prior approval of the Minister,
>
> 1. enter into an agreement with the government of Canada or any agency of the Government of Canada with respect to the education of
>
> a) Indian children . . .
>
> 2. enter into an agreement with a council of a band as defined in the Indian Act (Canada) with respect to the education of Indian children;
>
> 3. enter into an agreement with an organization representing the residents of an unorganized territory for the provision of educational services by the Board.
>
> (Government of Alberta, 1988, s. 46)

As is evident from this reference to legislation, School Boards in Alberta have the authority to enter into agreements with First Nation governments. Pauls (1996) noted the importance of this by stating, "the old system of tripartite agreements between the school jurisdiction, a First Nation and Indian Affairs is no longer necessary" (p. 113). In addition, such legislation does three things. It first of all, as stated by Pauls (1996), "implies that the Alberta government is taking into consideration the authority and jurisdiction that First Nations have to negotiate and sign their own tuition agreements as equal partners with a

provincial School Board" (p. 113). Secondly, it opens the door to agreements whose only limitations are the imagination and willingness of individual organizations and governments to establish cooperative, responsive partnerships. Thirdly, and more importantly, it is recognition of the right of individual First Nations to seif-determination.

Section (46) of the *School Act* also makes representation on a Board possible if a tuition agreement is reached between a First Nation and a provincial School Board.

> (3) If an agreement under subsection (2)(b), (c), or (d) provides for the appointment of 1 or more individuals resident in the unorganized territory to the Board, those individuals are deemed on their appointment to be members of the board and to have all the rights and obligations of trustees as set out in the agreement. (Government of Alberta, 1988,s. 46)

This section of the *School Act* provides an opportunity for First Nations in their tuition agreement negotiations to secure representation on the Board of Trustees, which, in accordance with the tuition agreement, will be providing educational services to the Native children. This legislation is important because it provides for the opportunity for First Nation government to become actively involved in the decision making body and process, rather than just purchasing educational services. Others also saw this legislation as important. Pauls (1996) recognized its importance because it "recognizes the responsibility of Indian parents for their children's education and provides for their participation on a provincial board of education" (p. 114). There is however one stipulation to note. This legislation provides for representation on a Board only if both parties to the agreement agree.

The Northland School Division Act (1983) also provides legislation that allows for the involvement of First Nations in a provincial educational system. Definitions, Section (1), subsection (1), (c) in defining an "elector" in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act (1983)* states that the definition includes an adult person

(i) who on election day is resident on an Indian reserve in respect of which a tuition agreement is in force between the board and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development of the Government of Canada. (Government of Alberta, 1983, s. 1)

It should be noted that Northland School Division No. 61, since the implementation of this act, and with Ministerial approval, has entered into bilateral agreements with individual First Nation governments. Bilateral agreements are between the school jurisdiction and the individual First Nation and do not require federal department involvement nor approval. In addition, the *Northland School Division Act* under Section 3 states

(3) The Minister may divide the Division into not fewer than 7 and not more than 31 subdivisions. (Government of Alberta, 1983, s. 3)

In addition Section 4, which deals with Local School Board Committees, provides in subsection 1 that

(1) A local school board committee shall be elected in each subdivision in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act* as if

(a) a local board committee were a board of trustees, and

(b) a subdivision were a district or division. (Government of Alberta, 1983, s.4).

This legislation provides for unique opportunities for those First Nation communities, irrespective of their status, who wish involvement in a provincial school jurisdiction. The legislation first of all allows those First Nation communities who have reached a tuition agreement with Northland School Division No. 61 to elect a Local School Board as if it were a Board of Trustees. The significance of this is, a First Nation community is assured of involvement in the election process. Also, First Nation community members whose children are sent off reserve to attend a provincially owned school are not excluded from provincial school board elections. In addition, community members have the opportunity, if elected, to be selected in the organizational meeting of the Local School Board Committee as chairman of the committee and become members

of the Board of Trustees for the jurisdiction. This is possible as according to Section 10 subsection 2 of the *Northland School Division Act*

> (2) The members of the board are those persons elected as chairmen of local school board committees under section 5 (2). (Government of Alberta, 1983, s 10).

Section 3 of the *Northland School Division Act* (subdivisions) in conjunction with Section 46 subsection 3 of the *School Act* (agreements) gives First Nation communities an additional opportunity. Communities with reserve status, if they so desire, in agreement with the Board of Trustees, can be recognized as a subdivision and elect a Local School Board Committee, and ensure community representation on a provincial school board.

This however does not resolve the conflict that communities with reserve status, which send their children off reserve to a provincially owned school, and which wish provincial school jurisdiction involvement and a Local School Board Committee elected according to the *Local Authorities Election Act.* These communities may find themselves in conflict with the rights and authorities accorded the elected Chief and Council of the First Nation through the *Indian Act.* The election of representatives does not guarantee reserve representation and it does not guarantee that the elected representative, if from a reserve, will also be the choice of the Chief as the educational representative of the community. This is an authority given to the Chief through the *Indian Act.*

Native Education Project

In 1983 the then Premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed, according to Mertl and Ward (1985)

> sketched the outlines of a policy to combat racism, including an education program in the schools conducted by the Alberta Human Rights Commission, and an investigation into how tolerance for minorities could be fostered in the school system. The government would announce the formation of the Committee for Tolerance and Understanding. . . . (p. 18).

The Committee for Tolerance and Understanding: Final Report was submitted in 1984 (Government of Alberta, 1984). Among other things, the report recognized

the need for the review of Native education in the province of Alberta. This is evident as the report stated that:

> One need only examine the tragic circumstances involving Native youth, which point to unacceptable dropout rates, the dearth of Native students graduating from colleges and universities, suicides, a disproportionate number of youth in correctional institutions, age/grade retardation and unacceptable levels of poverty and alcoholism, to conclude that our Native youth are being treated as second-class citizens by our educational system. (p. 116)

Based on the findings of the Final Report from the Committee for Tolerance and Understanding, Alberta Education in 1984 established the Native Education Project which was given the mandate to "first develop a Native Education Policy Statement and then begin the task of developing curricular materials which would reflect Native people in a positive light" (Native Education Project, 1995, p. 1). According to Alberta Education (1995) the Native Education Policy Statement was developed

> after extensive consultation with many Native groups in the province, including both Treaty Indian and Metis people. More than 180 meetings were held to determine what Native people in the province of Alberta wanted to see contained in policy. The purpose of the policy was to ensure that all students, in all Alberta schools, were provided with curricular materials that gave a more balanced and positive view of Native people. At the same time, the policy encouraged the involvement of Native people in the education of their children. (p. 1)

As stated in Alberta Education's publication Native Education in Alberta's Schools (1987) the Native Education policy committed the Alberta Government and Alberta Education to the development and delivery of program and services, which will

- provide enhanced and equal opportunities for Native students to acquire the quality of education traditional in Alberta;
- challenge Native students to learn and perform to the best of their abilities;
- provide opportunities for Native students to study and experience their own and other Native cultures and lifestyles;

- provide opportunities for Native people to help guide and shape the education of their children;
- provide opportunities for students in Alberta's schools to recognize and appreciate Native cultures, and their many contributions to our province and society. (p. 4)

The Native Education Policy was designed to be the Government of Alberta's response to the educational concerns of Native people. The policy outlines the action to be taken by Alberta Education in provincial schools. The policy does not apply to Band controlled, or on reserve schools. Alberta Education (1987) was emphatic about this in stating that "this policy applies only to Provincial schools and not to Band operated or Federally administered schools located on Indian reserves" (p. 2).

However, even considering their policy statement on Band operated schools, Alberta Education (1987) recognized that "excellence in Native education can be achieved through the sharing of educational responsibilities, through strong community partnerships" (p. 7). With this Alberta Education committed to "fostering meaningful partnerships" (p. 7). These partnerships were not limited to Native students attending provincial schools nor to just provincial school jurisdictions. This is evident as Alberta Education, when committing to partnerships, stated that they will

- Encourage school boards to negotiate the terms of tuition agreements with Indian Band Councils.
- Explore the possibility of Indian Band representation on school boards.
- Where resources exist, provide services for evaluating schools, educational programs, and teachers for permanent certification to Band operated schools when they request such services through a Band Council resolution.
- Where a tuition agreement exists, provide School Foundation Program grants to school boards on behalf of all Native students, including non-Status students attending schools administered by

the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs or Indian Bands. (p. 7)

Agreements and Understandings

The authority for a province to enter into agreements or understandings with First Nations was granted in an amendment to the Constitution of Canada. At the Federal-Provincial Meeting of Ministers On Aboriginal Constitutional Affairs held in Ottawa on March 20-21, 1986 a discussion paper titled Proposed 1985 Accord Relating to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada recommended that the Constitution of Canada should be amended to

(i) to recognize and affirm the rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada to self-government within the Canadian federation, where rights are set out in negotiated agreements, and

(ii) to commit the government of Canada and the provincial governments to participate in negotiations directed toward concluding agreements with Aboriginal people relating to self-government that are appropriate to the particular circumstances of those people (p. 2).

In February 1993 the Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations and the Government of Alberta signed a Memorandum of Understanding, that according to a Government of Alberta News release, (1993) was designed to "establish a process for dialogue between the Grand Council and the Government of Alberta." Premier Ralph Klein, speaking to the Legislative Assembly, described the Memorandum as the beginning "of a new and positive relationship between Treaty 8 First Nations located in Alberta and the Government of Alberta" and further stated that he looks forward to "working with Grand Chief Halcrow and the other representatives of the Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations in the refinement of the process for dialogue authorized by the Memorandum of Understanding (Government of Alberta News Release; February 10, 1993). The Memorandum of Understanding was based on the premises that:

- the Grand Council and Alberta wish to establish a means of consulting with each other regarding new and existing policies, programs and services;
- Alberta and the Grand Council recognize the special relationship between First Nations and Canada: and
- Alberta recognizes the traditional and historical rights of First Nations referred to in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (p. 2).

Based on these premises, and an understanding that nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding (1993) would abrogate or derogate from any aboriginal or treaty right referred to in the *Constitution Act, 1982* and that nothing in this agreement would or is intended to prejudice constitutional or self-government discussions (p. 2), the Grand Council and Alberta agreed to

- consult with each other in the development of policies, programs, and services in areas of interest or concern to either of the parties (p. 2).

The February 1993 Memorandum of Understanding was followed by a June 1993 Memorandum of Agreement. This second Memorandum was designed to fulfill the mutual objective of fostering good relations between the Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations and the province of Alberta and to "create a process or processes to accomplish this objective" (p. 1). The Background Brief to this Memorandum states that there are twin foundations to the Agreement. The first is that it provides "some certainty for our Nations and the province of Alberta that flows from the appropriate implementation of our Treaty. Proceeding from a Treaty basis is the only process that can achieve unanimous support of our people" (p. 2). The second foundation is described as an "urgent need to establish a new relationship between Treaty 8 First Nations, Alberta and Canada" (p. 2). The Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations believe that a relationship based on these twin foundations will produce "results for the well being of our people and the general provincial population . . . and that all of this can be accomplished through commitment, dialogue and the provision of dispute mechanisms for aspects of our future relationships that may prove

difficult" (p. 3). The 1993 Memoranda of Agreement were designed to accomplish this.

Specifically, the Memorandum of Agreement between the Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations and Alberta is based on:

- a mutual objective of fostering good relationships,
- a recognition of the need for a new relationship with Treaty * First Nations,
- the Government of Alberta acknowledging the unilateral altering of Treaty 8 without the consent of the First Nation parties by the 1930 Natural Resources Transfer Agreement,
- the Government of Alberta acknowledging an obligation to redress the unilateral alterations,
- a commitment to a comprehensive implementation of Treaty 8 in a manner consistent with aboriginal and treaty rights, and
- a commitment to facilitate the move toward self-sufficiency (p. 1).

Based on these principles Alberta and the Grand Council of Treaty 8 agree to, among others, the following:

1. A joint committee shall be established comprised of the Premier and his chosen representatives and political representatives of the Grand Council of Treaty 8 in order to further define the process described herein. This Committee will be called the Treaty 8 Joint Implementation Committee;
2. A task force will be established of senior officials of the Government of Alberta and senior officials of Treaty 8 with a view to facilitating the work of the joint committee and facilitating the establishing of a treaty implementation process. This task force will be called the Treaty 8 Implementation Task Force;
3. The mandate of the Treaty 8 Joint Implementation Committee and Treaty 8 Implementation Task Force is to ensure. . . obligations flowing from Treaty 8, be brought into the comprehensive implementation process;

4. The further mandate of the Treaty 8 Joint Implementation Committee and the Treaty 8 Implementation Task Force is to ensure that the rights of Treaty 8 First Nations are secured in a non-adversarial and honourable manner. . . ;
5. To provide fiscal resources required to complete the process of designing a treaty implementation process. . . (p. 3).

These two memoranda demonstrate that the province of Alberta has committed its politicians, senior officials and financial resources to the establishment of effective relationships with First Nations. What is also of importance with these agreements is that they are government policy, and as a result, not only set a standard for all government departments to follow, but also open the door to government agencies negotiating agreements with First Nations that reflect the spirit and intent of the policy.

An example of this is a *Consultation Accord* (1994) draft agreement negotiated between the Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations and Northland School Division No. 61. The purpose of the Consultation Accord (1994) is to establish an effective process on consultation between the parties and to ensure the best possible education of the clientele served (p. 1). The Accord commits to a process of "active partnership with each community to provide educational services which will enhance and support the integrity and self-development of each child entrusted to our care" (p. 1). The consultation objectives of the Accord include a commitment to (a) consult on a regular basis on issues, direction, and evaluation, (b) to facilitate the undertaking of joint initiatives, (c) to facilitate communication, training and involvement of Treaty First Nation members in all aspects of education, (d) to promote ownership in terms of the provision of education and training, (e) to facilitate capacity building of Treaty First Nation members in the area of administration, instruction and support services, and (f) to jointly explore and promote resources requirements to fulfill all joint objectives. (p. 3) In addition, a consultation table consisting of the Grand Chief of the Grand Council, the Senior Technical Officer for Education of the Grand Council, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Northland School

Division No. 61, its Superintendent of Schools and additional members, if mutually agreed, will execute the consultation agenda.

The 1993 Memoranda of Understanding and Agreement paved the way for an October 1995 Accord struck between Canada and the Chiefs of the First Nations of Treaty 6, 7, and 8 Alberta. The Canada and Alberta Accord (1995) is based on the premise that Canada and the Council of Chiefs "will form an Understanding to action discussion on issues of mutual interest of concern affecting Treaty First Nations, of which jurisdiction and authority are of paramount importance to the represented Treaty First Nations" (p. 1). In this Accord, Canada acknowledges that the Council of Chiefs "will proceed with this Understanding based on the original spirit and true intent of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 (Alberta) as understood and told by the elders" (p. 1). It further states that Canada recognizes "Aboriginal and Treaty rights referred to in section 35 of the *Constitution Act,* 1982" (p. 1). Finally based on an understanding that "stand alone bilateral treaty discussions in Alberta have already been established" the Council of Chiefs and Canada agree to the following:

- The Council of Chiefs and Canada agree to discuss issues of mutual interest or concern, of which jurisdiction and authority affecting Treaty First Nations of Treaty 6, 7, and 8 (Alberta) are of paramount importance to the Treaty First Nations of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 (Alberta).
- The Council of Chiefs and Canada agree that process(es) for discussions will be determined by the Council of Chiefs and the appropriate Minister(s) responsible for specific areas of interest or concern within one year of this Understanding coming into force.
- Process(es) entered into in accordance with item 2 will include mechanisms for discussion involving both elected and appointed officials, and will be guided by the development of an immediate sub-agreement on working procedures to be executed as soon as possible (pp. 1-2).

What is of interest and importance in this Accord is that firstly, the jurisdiction and authority of First Nations is recognized over areas of mutual interest and concern, as well as Treaty rights, which are recognized in section 35 of the *Constitution Act,1982*. Secondly, the opportunity for sub-agreements on any area affecting First Nations is available, and thirdly, the Council of Chiefs have access to appropriate Ministers responsible for specific areas of interest or concern. This could be interpreted to mean a First Minister or a Premier of a particular province if the First Nation has a specific concern.

An *Understanding on First Nations/Alberta Relations* (1995) soon followed the Canada/Alberta Accord. This agreement is based on the wish of the Council of Chiefs "to form an Understanding with Alberta to action Government to Government discussions on issues of mutual interest or concern affecting Treaty First Nations. . ." (p. 1). Within this agreement, Alberta "recognizes the special relationship between Treaty First Nations and the Crown in the Right of Canada" (p. 1). Simultaneously , the Council of Chiefs and the province of Alberta express a concern about the changing relationship between the First Nations and Canada. Based on these understandings the Council of Chiefs and Alberta agree as follows:

A. The Council of Chiefs and Alberta agree to discuss issues of mutual interest or concern, of which jurisdiction and authority affecting Treaty First Nations are of paramount importance to the represented Treaty First Nations.

B. (a) The Council of Chiefs and Alberta agree that process(es) for discussion in the areas of interest or concern will be determined by the Council of Chiefs and the appropriate Minister(s) responsible for the areas of interest or concern within one year of this agreement coming into force.

C. (b) Process(es) entered into in accordance with 2(a) will include mechanisms for discussion involving both elected and appointed officials and, will be guided by the development of a sub-agreement on working procedures to be executed as soon as possible (p. 2).

This Understanding of First Nations and Alberta Relation (1995) mirrors the previously discussed First Nation - Canada Relations Accord with one distinct difference, that of providing for the bilateral discussion between the province of Alberta and the Council of Chiefs of Treaty First Nations, without the underlying fear of misrepresenting or endangering rights according to Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Another agreement of significance to this thesis is the *Sub-Agreement on Education between The Chiefs of the First Nations of Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 (Alberta) and Her Majesty, The Queen in Right of Canada (1996)*. The purpose of this sub-agreement is to "promote efficient, effective and orderly discussions leading to a framework agreement that will set out First Nations' jurisdiction and authority in the area of education" (p. 2). The scope of the sub-agreement includes, but is not limited to, "early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, post-secondary education and adult education" (p. 2). However it is the role of the sub-agreement that will be of particular interest to provincial school jurisdictions. Within this sub-agreement the parties "agree to seek agreement from the Province of Alberta in matters of Education where provincial jurisdiction and authority is affected, e.g. First Nation's children attending off reserve schools" (p. 2). Though not signed by the province this sub-agreement potentially has repercussions for provincial educational institutions as this agreement is designed to implement First Nations' jurisdiction and authority over education.

The review of legislation that lends itself to partnerships would indicate that there are few roadblocks, and many avenues open, to allow for significant partnerships between the provincial and First Nations governments. What is required now is to determine if the desire and trust is present, if the roles can be defined, if the benefits are significant and the expectations are achievable.

CHAPTER 7

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

> I went to the old man to ask him to take the guest speaker talk, that he do it instead of me, and he said "no." He asked me if I was in a hurry and I said, "no." So he said, "I will tell you what you have to tell these young people." Basically what he said is that it would be good for you to point out to these young people who are graduating that they realize they are builders of bridges between the Native culture and the white man's culture. He said in order to build a bridge, the foundation, both sides, have to be solid or otherwise your bridge will collapse. He said these young people have to know and live our ways but they have to know the white man's way. They have to know and live their ways, they have to know the white man's way (Personal interview).

The intent of this chapter is to profile the participants of this study. The participants in this study were selected purposely because they could provide information relevant to and valuable for this study. Among the criteria used in selecting those to be included for interview were:

- positions held in the educational community,
- political experiences especially in the First Nation political system,
- educational experience in both the First Nation as well as the larger society community,
- position within the First Nation community, e.g. elder,
- a position of power or decision making authority in the community,
- experience in negotiating agreements, or
- any combination of the above criteria.

In total 18 participants were interviewed and all responses were recorded and information tabulated in accordance with the method discussed in Chapter 3. It will also become apparent to the reader that the number of participants varies from group to group. For example more teachers were interviewed than Directors. This is because of the earlier mentioned method of participant selection where one participant is requested to suggest others that they believe would make significant contribution to this study.

Alberta Education

Three of the participants interviewed were senior employees of Alberta Education. All three of the participants had extensive educational training and experience as well as intimate experiences with First Nations and Band operated schools and provincial school jurisdictions offering educational services to First Nation children. Allan, the first of the three Alberta Education personnel has 37 years experience in education in the province. He has held numerous positions in the educational field from teacher to superintendent to department official. He has had significant involvement with First Nation schools and First Nation politicians often representing provincial interests and perspectives during negotiations on agreements. Allan expressed perspectives that would indicate that levels of government are not providing the levels of support that they are capable of.

Andy was the second Alberta Education Official who agreed to be a participant in this study. Andy has over 30 years experience in education. Andy, like Allan, has held a number of positions from teacher to superintendent to Cultural Education Consultant to Alberta Education Official. Andy spent the first nine years of his teaching career in First Nation communities. His education is geared toward Indian and northern education and sociology. He holds a Masters degree in Education. He expressed an opinion that he has learned a significant amount from First Nation peoples and organizations.

Ann is the third Alberta Educational Official participant. Ann is Metis, born and raised on one of the Metis Settlements in this province. She received her Bachelor's degree and her Diploma from a university in Alberta. Ann has 25 years experience as an educator. She has taught for five different jurisdictions in Alberta and has experienced one-room multi-grade situations and has instructed Cree at most grade levels. With Alberta Education, Ann liaised with First Nation communities and schools. She was extensively involved in First Nation curriculum development projects and school evaluations. Ann's basic perspective is that curriculum development and teacher training are necessary for academic success in First Nation schools, and partnerships with various

communities and levels of government is necessary to ensure the development of these initiatives.

Superintendents/Directors

Superintendent/Directors were the second group of participants of interest to this study. The participants were chosen primarily because of their experience. These four participants have held or hold senior administrative positions with First Nation schools or First Nation political organizations that have significant involvement in First Nation education.

Stan is Superintendent of Schools for a First Nation that has recently assumed responsibility for the delivery of educational services. Prior to full Band operation, this First Nation's educational services were offered by a provincial school jurisdiction through a tuition agreement. As Superintendent of Schools Stan's role mirrors his provincial counterparts. Stan has more than 20 years educational experience. He has held positions in provincial school jurisdictions from teacher to principal to supervisor prior to assuming his present role as Superintendent of Schools. Stan's basic premise is that there is room for a network to be set up between provincial school boards, government agencies and surrounding schools as the same thing is being reinvented by a number of boards.

Sidney's educational and administrative career has been, in its entirety, with First Nation communities. He held the position of teacher and principal of a Federally operated school. He then assumed the position of Director of Education for a First Nation that took control of its education. His role was to assist the First Nation in bringing local control to a reality. His background also includes federal experience as Superintendent of Education responsible for Secondary Education Programs and Provincial Education Tuition Programs. These programs involved contractual relationships with First Nations and provincial schools. He was also a Senior Education Analyst with the federal government, Superintendent of Education with a Tribal Council and is presently the Chief Executive Officer responsible for education and financial affairs for a

number of Bands in Alberta. In total Sidney has more than 25 years of experience in First Nation education and administration. Sidney brings an interesting perspective to the participants' responses in that his experiences cover a wide spectrum from federal civil servant to Tribal Council Chief Executive Officer playing a major role in assisting communities in their goal of realizing self-government.

Simon is a Director of Education for a First Nation. Simon is a member of the same First Nation of which he is Director of Education. All of Simon's formal education was received in a provincial education system. Simon draws a distinction between his education and his formal education. He considers himself to be still learning, but what he is learning this time is from the elders and traditional Native institutions. With this, he says he is trying to find the parallels with white society. He now relates all of his work, the direction he is taking education and the decisions he makes for the children of this First Nation to the elders. Simon, with the support of the Chief and Council, has set a course for education that will ultimately have his First Nation in full control of all levels of education for its membership. Previous to this, all educational services were purchased via a tuition agreement from provincial school jurisdictions or provincial educational institutions.

Steven has been heavily involved in education for the past 20 years in a number of Aboriginal communities but primarily in one community, and for the past 15 years he has been the Director of Education and Director of Operations for that First Nation community. Steven's experience with education comes from working on a reserve . This, he considers First Nations education; education of on-reserve First Nation members. He draws a distinction between this and Aboriginal education. Aboriginal education would include all of the Native population including the urban Native population and there are other issues, in Steven's opinion, around Aboriginal education. Steven brings a perspective that is shaped by twenty years of educational experiences outside of the province of Alberta.

Teachers/Principals

The next grouping of participants that were of interest to this study is teacher/principals. In particular, I approached school-based educators who had experiences with both First Nation schools as well as provincial school jurisdictions. In total 6 teacher/principals were interviewed.

Theresa is a graduate of a residential school. After graduation she attended a college in Edmonton with the full intention of entering the medical profession. This intention was interrupted by marriage. As a mother of two children she stayed home to raise their children. While at home she did some part time clerical work, which led to her becoming, involved with, at the time, the only native paper in the province of Alberta. Here she was exposed to politics, community development and self-determination initiatives. These exposures helped shape her political perspectives and awareness. In 1975 she was approached to enter a university program called Morning Star, which, at that time, was a new teacher training initiative. Upon graduation students of this program were eligible to receive a Letter of Authority to teach from the Registrar of Alberta Education. Theresa took advantage of this and taught Cree Language for 2 years prior to returning to university to finish her education degree. This has been followed by graduate work at the University of Alberta, 16 years of teaching in provincial school jurisdictions and Band controlled schools and providing supervision of Cree Language and Native Education Programs with a provincial public school board.

Terry is a member of a First Nation. He is thirty years old and holds two university degrees. He describes himself as leading a transient life as his mother worked for the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. At an early age his mother moved to a First Nation community in northern Canada and he was adopted into the Band as his step-dad was a member of that First Nation. He lived in four provinces in Canada at various stages of his school life, and attended many different schools. He graduated from his home reserve school. Education is valued by his family. His mother holds four university degrees and his step-dad has a master's ticket in his trade. He became a teacher because

he wanted to give something back to his people, as his First Nation community paid for his education. He taught for First Nation schools for the past 5 years, the last as a vice-principal. He is presently teaching for a First Nation school operated by a provincial school jurisdiction through a cost recovery tuition agreement. Terry and his mother found out late in life that their grandfather was Mohawk. He was raised apart from First Nation values but has been reintroduced to his culture and, in his words, is learning a great deal.

Tammy is Metis. She has a Bachelor of Education degree with a major in elementary Social Studies. She has been in the teaching profession for 16 years, 11 with a public school jurisdiction 3 of which she held the position of principal. For the past 5 years she has been employed as a teacher with a Band controlled school. Tammy's experience with both systems has provided her the opportunity to lend comparisons to the systems and formulate opinions on the concept of partnerships.

Trish is also a First Nation member. She is presently employed by a First Nation education authority at a junior/senior high school as a Coordinator of the Student Services program. This involves coordinating a number of student programs such as Special Needs, Career counseling and Personal counseling and ensuring the integration of all services to maximize the benefit to students. She is also responsible for networking services for children from both inside and outside the community. Trish began her teaching career in 1984 and has held the positions of teacher, assistant principal and principal for schools in her First Nation community. She holds a graduate degree and is presently pursuing post-graduate studies. She has also held political positions within her First Nation. Her experience brings a mixture of educational, pedagogical and political perspectives.

Tina is also a member of a First Nation, and is employed by her First Nation as principal of its only, on reserve school. Prior to obtaining this position, which she has held for the past 6 years, Tina taught with the public school system at the secondary and post secondary levels. This particular First Nation is now in the process of constructing an on reserve elementary school and they

will eventually construct a junior as well as a senior high school on reserve. It is the plan of this First Nation to provide all educational services on reserve thereby drawing all students back to the reserve for their education. Students presently attend public schools located off reserve in neighboring communities. Tina is playing a major role in this community educational initiative. Tina's early education was at a mission school. Her mother later took her out of the Mission school as a bus became available to transport her to junior high school. Attending school at home often caused her to miss school as she spent considerable time baby-sitting. At the end of junior high school she went to a boarding school to attend to her high school education and spent some time in a boarding home program as well. She dropped out of high school because she was forced to take a course in which she lacked confidence. She later did upgrading and challenged university entrance examination and was accepted into the Morning Star teacher-training program. However, she decided to decline her acceptance as she believed that this was special treatment and she wanted to make it through the regular system without receiving any special treatment. During her post secondary studies Tina used to feel alone. She, as a result of this, left university to attend college. The college she attended played a very crucial part in her life because she needed to refocus, culturally. Spiritually she was losing the connection, and this college, with its traditional focus and spiritual leaders, provided what she needed. This experience had a strong impact on how she teaches and what she is presently doing and trying to do in her present situation and her views on the questions posed to her during the interview.

Thomas graduated from the University of Alberta in 1989 at which time he accepted a teaching/counseling position with a school jurisdiction in northern Alberta. After one year in the north he taught for three years in Edmonton prior to accepting his first administrative appointment as a vice principal in a central Alberta rural community. With this experience he then accepted a position as principal for a First Nation education authority that has an operational tuition agreement with a provincial school jurisdiction, a position he still holds. Many of

Thomas' perspectives are shaped by his political and educational experiences of dealing with two political bodies; a school board and a Chief and Council.

Elders

An elder's perspective is essential to a study that is attempting to address a concept of partnerships between First Nation and provincial education authorities. Within the Aboriginal culture elders hold different positions of respect. For example some elders are spiritual leaders or are knowledgeable about the history of the community. Elders are usually people who know most about the community and are sought for their advice by individuals and politicians prior to a decision being made.

Ernest was the first elder I interviewed. He considers himself a "rough Indian" and says that Indian Affairs respectfully referred to him as that and called him that. He says he does not mind the name because he fights for his people. One of Ernest's first educational fights was for control of the residential schools by the Band. He was involved with the First Nation as an elected Counselor who negotiated with the Federal government for control of the residential school that all of the children of his community attended. He credits this control with giving the children of this community a better education, an opportunity to place their own members in teaching and administrative positions and the opportunity to develop more relevant curriculum. Ernest's views are shaped by years of life and political experiences and being on the leading edge of self-government initiatives.

Eunice is an elder from the same community as Ernest. Eunice's early education was at a residential school. At the age of 15 and in grade 8 she went to a small country school. She felt awkward in this situation because of her age, height and the fact that she was an Indian. After a few more years of school she took on a job as a Nanny. As a Nanny for a prominent family she traveled extensively. Eunice's involvement in education came when she was asked to be chaperone for a number of students from her home community who were about to travel to the United States to partake in a program designed to expose

students to culturally relevant curriculum while taking courses in self esteem building. This sparked her interest and involvement with youth and their education. From this point on there was her election as Chief and counselor and numerous appointments to the education authority. It is this mixture of educational, life skills and political exposure that helped shape Eunice's perspective on this topic.

Elizabeth fits the commonly held perception of what an elder would be. She is knowledgeable, kind, involved, respected and an aunt, grandmother or mother to just about everyone in the community. She is a product of the residential school system and though her experiences were not entirely negative she is a firm believer that First Nations should have full authority over education as well as all other aspects of their lives. Elizabeth has been politically involved in First Nation affairs for a number of years. She has held the position of Chief and counselor and as well has been involved in a number of national First Nation initiatives. She has held positions on her First Nation Education Authority and has also held the position of Chairperson of the Board for a provincial school jurisdiction. In addition to this, Elizabeth has sat on a number of First Nation as well as provincial boards, including hospital board and the justice committee. She is a valued member of the community who has earned the respect of all who have the opportunity to deal with her. When asked, Elizabeth considers her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, who in total are fast approaching 90, to be her greatest accomplishment and joy. It is this perspective that is portrayed by Elizabeth.

Chiefs

Chiefs were the final group of participants interviewed for this thesis. The Chiefs interviewed held these positions for a varying number of years. Chief Charles' community belongs to a Tribal Council. Within this Tribal Council different Nations have opted for different educational choices. Individually these communities have taken their Nations on different educational paths.

Chief Charles is serving his third term as Chief of his Nation. This Nation is the newest of the three involved. Negotiations continue with the federal government and the province for a specified reserve, and all indications are that a settlement is imminent. Prior to self-determination possibilities the education of members for this First Nation was the total responsibility of the province including all fiduciary commitments. With the recent recognition of this community as a First Nation, the fiduciary commitment became the responsibility of the federal government and the First Nation then became more intimately involved with the decision affecting the delivery of education to their membership. All decisions and direction affecting education, as well as all other aspects of the development of the community, lie totally with the First Nation community and its leadership. Regarding education, Chief Charles and his Nation have made it clear that it is their intention, to continue a relationship with the provincial jurisdiction that is presently offering educational services to its membership. The parameters of this relationship will be agreed upon and set through the development of a tuition agreement.

Chief Cameron is Chief of one of the largest First Nations in Alberta. This First Nation is not affiliated with a Tribal Council rather has chosen to approach all its Nation business on its own. Chief Cameron is in his fist term as Chief. Educationally has a strong commitment to ensuring every educational opportunity for the Nation's membership. His Nation is embarking on an impressive initiative of constructing on reserve schools in all of the communities that make up the Nation. There is a strong commitment to first language and Native Studies curriculum development. Individually, Chief Cameron has attended university, held various political and administrative positions within his Nation and has held board and advisory positions for provincial institutions. It is these perspectives and their obvious political background and exposure that shape their perspective on this issue.

In total 18 participants were interviewed. Three participants were from Alberta Education, four held the position of superintendent/director of education, six were teachers or principals, three Elders and two Chiefs. This experience

and the exposure to these participants have been a tremendous and invigorating learning experience.

Figure 3 Participants

Alberta Education	Superintendents/ Directors	Teachers/ Principals	Elders	Chiefs
Allan	Stan	Theresa	Ernest	Charles
Andy	Sidney	Terry	Eunice	Cameron
Ann	Simon	Tammy	Elizabeth	
	Steven	Trish		
		Tina		
		Thomas		
Totals 3	4	6	3	2

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH FINDINGS

> In my experience of Indian decision-making, the important thing is to hear the other guy - have respect for the way he sees it. (Wilfred Pelletier, Ojibway Nation)

An examination of the questions posed of the participants indicates that I was interested in determining, the following:

- the educational issues facing First Nation schools and communities,
- whether the provincial educational authorities should be involved in a partnership agreement with First Nation communities, and if so, what role should they play and what services could they provide,
- if other provincial educational agencies have a role to play in the delivery of educational services to First Nation communities,
- the role of the federal government, and, if a partnership with the province could potentially erode federal responsibilities,
- the benefits of a partnership,
- the expectation and vision of a partnership, and the criteria and conditions that First Nations would place on a partnership, and
- who, if anyone, should initiate partnership discussions, if it seen as a viable alternative.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. Each section deals specifically with the information I obtained from the participants that helped clarify the seven related areas of interest. Each of these seven areas reflects the responses received from the five groups or categories of respondents, namely, Alberta Education officials, field based teachers and principals, superintendents/directors of education, elders and chiefs. Each area was examined for common re-occurring themes.

1. Educational Issues Facing First Nations.

The questions of identifying the issues surrounding the education of First Nation children appeared to be fundamental. Placing the participant in a position of examining the issues accomplished two things. First, it set the tone for having the participants respond to the rest of the interview schedule, and secondly, it brought the participants to the point of surmising about who should be involved in the delivery of educational services to First Nation children, in order to resolve issues they identified, and whether or not there is a place for the province is helping resolve these issues. Issues require resolution and resolutions require us to examine and plan.

Alberta Education Officials

While all three participants identified a number of issues, which they felt were critical in the education of First Nation children, they each identified different areas as being more significant. Ann, from her perspective, felt that the primary issues centered around curriculum and the fact that the curriculum taught in our schools "does not include the Native perspective." She is of the opinion that this has to be changed because "Native students have to start feeling good about who they are and a Native perspective at all grades, in all subject areas would bring out the best in our students." By doing this, Ann is certain that "more Native students would graduate because they would then feel that as students, some part of the system belongs to them as well."
Ann shared this story about one of the experiences her son encountered in high school.

> "You know what my Physics 20 teacher said mom. He said, when a brave used to go hunting he would smoke kinnikinnick so that he was not hungry. He said, a brave would not take a lunch because he smoked and was not hungry." So I explained what kinnikinnick was, and why a brave did not have to take lunch, because lunch was along the way. He accepted that and went back to his Physics teacher and told him about it. The next time he came home he was really upset. "Do you know what my teacher said today." He said, "before the Plains Indians had horses the squaws pulled the travois." I said to my son, "do you want me to speak with him?" He answered, "please do, otherwise I may punch him." My son was upset. I thought, how about those hundreds of children who

> come home and tell their parents and the parents say, "Oh, just forget it." The next time, about a month later the same teacher taught something positive. My son was so excited to share it with me.

The second issue that was of concern to Ann related to teacher preparedness. It is her feeling that all teachers in Alberta will, at some point in time, teach Aboriginal children and as a result "teachers should be aware of the cultural differences and traditional learning styles." There are many similarities but there are also many differences that teachers are not generally aware of, according to Ann. One suggestion she has to help offset this concern is "a mandatory university course on Native awareness for all education students."

In addition to the curriculum issues, Ann also identified other issues that she felt needed to be resolved in order to ensure more academic success of First Nation students. She felt that although her next issues were not directly related to education of First Nation children, they warranted examination as they could have a significant educational impact. These issues centered around Native parents getting back to traditional parenting skills. According to Ann, there are still a lot of traditional parenting skills remaining but, if we wish to revitalize all of them she is of the opinion that "we have to start treating our children with respect and go back to the values we lost over the years. We have to go back in order to make our system work again, because right now we are in the middle. We are sitting on the fence and we do not know which way to go."

Andy felt that the primary issue relates to who is responsible for what, and who should be involved, and what are the responsibilities of the various levels of government. He is of the opinion that even though there are many side issues related to education, the number one issue right now is the whole idea of partnerships between the federal, provincial, and First Nations governments. According to Andy, "the 'feds' are 'downloading' and the province is saying that this is not, or that is not, our responsibility. Yet, the First Nations are saying, we are Alberta citizens too." To resolve this Andy stated that what will have to happen is the "self-government process will eventually have to delineate the responsibilities of all three levels of government, and maybe a fourth, if there is a

municipality involved." Andy's concern is that unless we resolve issues of responsibility we will be "consistently spinning our wheels." He further identified other issues related to roles and responsibilities, and these he classified as "control" items. For Andy, these were areas where the First Nation, in reality, does not have control even though it is within their realm of responsibility.

> Many Bands now operate their own schools. Sure they get money from the federal government, enough basically to hire their own teachers. But, they use provincial services. They use teachers that have been educated by another provincial government agency. They are expected to use the Alberta curriculum in their schools. Most First Nation schools are writing the Provincial Achievement exams and the Diploma examinations. Some choose not to. We know one First Nation that has told us that when they have self-government they might offer their own grade 12 diploma.

According to Andy these are the kind of issues that need resolution. Where does the province's authority and involvement start and where does it end?

In order to realize some of the benefits of self-government, such as the ability to control school accreditation, First Nations would have to enter into agreements or negotiate with other provincial agencies, such as post-secondary institutions. An assurance of accreditation and acceptance of their curriculum standards is necessary in order to ensure access to provincial post-secondary institutions. Andy recognized this as an issue, and commented that "the First Nations would have to make their own deals with the universities or colleges." This issue, according to Andy, is related to his previously discussed issue because "whether it is public education or another area, First Nations have to depend on provincial regulations or provincial assistance. This is what has to be clarified. These are some of the issues that need to be resolved, the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government."

The issues identified by Allan related to roles and responsibilities. Who is responsible for what, and what role does each of the participants play?

> We need to clarify areas of responsibilities and accountability, and I think someone needs to take the leadership role and get the job done. I think it is the same thing as treaty rights. What do they imply? What is the

understanding? We all have a responsibility because it is to everyone's advantage to educate children.

Superintendents/Directors of Education

Four participants were interviewed. All four, as is evident from their profiles, have experience with First Nation school systems.

Stan felt that much of the First Nations' culture is presently in transition and as such is impacting on governance, and this is creating a problem. The reason Stan gave for this is that "in the cultural situation we are in, the circle has always been in place. Our circle does not exist anymore. We have become, in our communities, very complacent with a top down governance. We have adapted and by doing so we have cut out the elders." Stan has expressed an opinion that a return to more cultural and traditional values and structures would help alleviate some of the issues that he sees in education.

Sidney is quite definitive about what he sees as the primary issue facing First Nations education, and he echoes the sentiments expressed by Ann. Sidney's single, biggest issue relates to the sensitivity of educators, teachers and administrators who are not aware of the needs of First Nation children. He states that the "most uncomfortable reality is that mainstream teachers who end up teaching children, many of whom are Aboriginal children, have little or no awareness of the cultural background of the children involved." The problem with this, according to Sidney, is that teachers have a tendency to "take as given truths, their ideal white, western, mainstream, urban background as being reality, and all the learning symbols involved in that, and, they assume that the Aboriginal child understands." The single primary issue for Sidney is the training of our educators to educate Aboriginal children, and more importantly than anything else, it is the understanding of the cultural background and the social conditions from which these children come. Without that understanding Sidney is convinced that teachers are "preventing themselves from accessing the needs of that child, and the things that motivate the child. As a result they will not know when they are alienating a child."

For clarification purposes, Steven drew a distinction between Aboriginal education and First Nations education. His experience comes from being on a reserve, and this he considers First Nation education. Aboriginal education, in his opinion, covers all Aboriginal peoples including off reserve urban Natives. Steven is of the opinion that the whole concept of self-government and the potential impact that it will have on education needs to be defined.

> In the province where I have most of my experience, I know that most of the Bands have gone through a process where they said, "all right, we are now in charge. That means we do not have to follow the original curriculum, we do not have to hire certified teachers and we do not have to follow any particular process in hiring and firing staff.

According to Steven many First Nation communities found out that this did not work, and "now many Bands are drifting back toward some kind of an association with the province, or some kind of format that leads to a little more stability in their organization."

Steven found in his experiences and studies in Alberta that the same set of circumstances did not apply, as many of the First Nations in this province did not take the Band control route as many did in Saskatchewan. His experiences have demonstrated that "there were always ties to the province and Alberta Education and the door has been left open for participation." What we need now in, Steven's opinion is "to start to look at how those connections can be made, while still respecting each others jurisdiction."

Steven is of the opinion that there is no question that First Nations should have full control and jurisdiction over their children's education. However there is no question in his mind that First Nations "cannot exercise that jurisdiction without cooperation with the provincial departments of education. Otherwise their children are not getting a proper or full education."

The issue, for Steven, is how do we recognize First Nation jurisdiction and still provide quality education at a time when his Aboriginal culture is caught between two worlds? Two worlds meaning "there are some young people who are trying to learn the traditional way of thinking, the traditional way of doing things while at the same time they are exposed to a larger society that is having

a considerable influence. It's the parallel that they are trying to make between the white society and the Native tradition that is causing them to be caught between the two worlds."

Simon credits the elders with providing him direction and he says that his answer to my questions are a reflection of what he has learned from the elders, combined with his own experiences and education. He offered his opening remarks as a lead into what he considers the primary issue facing First Nation education. For Simon there has been a change and that change is that "we have to live side by side with white society. But the primary issue is that the First Nations have to adjust to accommodate for that change."

A second issue for Simon is that mainstream society has an understanding and a view of First Nation peoples that is, a lot of the time, not true. At some point in time, according to Simon, "we all have to be taught and understand about communication between First Nations and mainstream society." In Simon's opinion "the communication that goes on is what the Department of Indian Affairs and not the First Nations people want."

Simon expressed a third issue that was of concern to many, and that is the whole area of the younger generation not understanding, and in fact losing, their culture their language and losing the values that the elders talk about. Simon is concerned that the language, culture and values are disappearing and it is "essential that they be maintained." He finds that when he talks to people of his generation "they seem to think that, well you are trying to go back and live in a teepee. It's an understanding that I am trying to get across to the people. You talk to the elders and they will tell you that it's an understanding issue." People are missing everything intended according to Simon.

Teacher/Principals

Six teacher/principals, who are presently field based, or who have had field-based experience, were interviewed in this category. All participants, with the exception of one, are Aboriginal. The responses received from this group were as varied as the talents and abilities each individual possesses.

Two of the participants, Theresa and Tammy, expressed the opinion that curriculum development or curriculum needs of Aboriginal students is the major issue area that First Nations have to recognize and resolve. Theresa believes there are two "camps", or views on curriculum development "one camp that wants materials and curriculum and teaching methods to be changed to suit the students, and there is the camp that does not want any change because they think it will compromise the culture and language." This second group, according to Theresa, is in a little bit of a conflict because "they want their kids to learn their own language and culture but they also want the white man's learning."

Tammy's view on the curriculum is that it does not match the background and culture of the students. As a result, her experience indicates that "students seem to be behind, year after year, and they do not measure up to provincial standards of evaluation." For Tammy "the curriculum mismatch is both the problem and the issue." Tammy also expressed a concern about the politics of education and how politics materialize in the classroom. This is an issue for her because she is of the opinion that, to a large degree, politics interferes with what happens in the classroom.

Theresa identified the area of self-government and self-determination as an issue that she has spent considerable time thinking about. Her thought is, that the bottom line in any initiative is usually money and this creates a quandary for many First Nation initiatives. "How can one determine what it is they want to do if they are totally dependent on the government for the financial resources to accomplish an initiative?"

Theresa also felt that this whole area of finance is an issue, because many Native people, do not understand budgets. This she believes is cultural, because within the Native culture there is not the same emphasis, or priority, set on money, like there is in the Euro-Canadian culture. According to Theresa, balancing budgets and saving money is not within their cultural background, and this trait "shows up in our whole philosophy and the way our people look at money." The reason for this says Theresa, is because "the basic idea of saving or planning for the future is that in a way, you are playing God. You are saying, 'I

am going to be alive ten years from now. I am going to save for the future.' You do not have control of the future."

Terry, who is a principal of a First Nation school, saw the duplication of services as an issue. For Terry this duplication of services is "costing First Nations millions of dollars that could be put to better use."

Thomas, who is also a principal of a First Nations school, is more concerned with the effects the entire system is having on his staff particularly as it relates to teacher stress. Thomas lists "the feeling of isolation that teachers have when they are introduced to remote communities, and misunderstanding of the unique learning styles of Aboriginal students, as all contributing to teacher stress and the feelings of burnout." In Thomas' opinion, stress levels "of non-Native teachers are increased as they are introduced to a very unique and beautiful culture and values system, which is very different from the mainstream."

While curriculum, politics, finance, services and stress were issues for colleagues, Trish preferred to "dwell on one issue", dropouts. The dropout rate was not just an issue for her school, but she felt that it is a concern of all First Nation schools across Alberta, especially high schools. Trish felt that this issues needs addressing.

Elders

Control of education was always an issue for Ernest, and it continues to be an area and an issue of concern. He relayed the following story to reinforce his stand on control of education.

> I stopped the school buses here when I was in power. Not only me, there were nine of us in power. We had a strike, the first of its kind in Canada. Did you ever hear of an Indian going on strike? I made the Indian Agent mad. He said, "You are obstructing the law, it is the law, it's compulsory that the kids go to school everyday." "Tell me whose law," I said. He could not say anything. I told him, "that is your law, it does not apply on reserve, I am the leader, I am the law, we will exercise it in court." He could not do anything, he could not find the book that said he was the law on reserve. I won the case.

Ernest says that he and his community had a rough time because the government did not approve of their action, however he believed that it was

necessary to fight for their rights. He continued his story about gaining control of their educational system.

> When I sat with Jean Chretien [Minister responsible for Indian Affairs] he gave me my destiny, to do it my own way in school, to run it ourselves, to spell out our own policies. But, it is like when you give candy to a kid, it tastes good. We are going back. They are always good to us, kind to us, but they keep us down, keep us down there. I don't like the system today. That's was what I was fighting for. Control.

Eunice's issue is an extension of that outlined by Ernest and his Council when they had power. It is an issue of involvement by the parents and the community..

> To me education and involvement in education, should start at home. I see a lot of things on the reserve that does not help this. A lot of these children, it is not their fault when they fail. They have no support. Its getting worse and worse. How can these kids learn when they do not have the skills to learn? How to make it better, that's the big question? Presently there is not enough involvement in education.

Elizabeth, like Ernest, sees "taking over" and everything that goes with it as an issue. This is why she sat on the Planning Committee when her First Nation was planning to take over control of their education directly.

> I always felt that Native people have to teach their own children. Somehow we have to get Native teachers because they understand the ways of Native children. I found that the system seemed to want to change our children rather than just teach them what they need to know to survive in the outside world. They were trying to change their habits first, the way that they dressed, even the way they ate. It seemed that they were trying to kill the way of life. I think you have heard me say this to teachers before. "You are here to teach our children to be able to compete in the rest of society, not to become little white people, but to become educated Indian people capable of getting along no matter they go."

Chiefs

Chief Charles expressed a concern that centered around language and language acquisition. He believes that one of the things that hinder the education level of First Nation people is the culture and language barriers, which arise because mainstream society, in this country, is largely English. Chief

Charles does not think that the capacity to learn and compete with mainstream society is an issue. He believes that it has more to do with culture and language and how First Nation children are brought up. "I think these are barriers to education that we as First Nations face. I think that this is a factor we have to overcome first."

Chief Charles also commented on how this barrier could be surmounted. It is his opinion that some school jurisdictions could provide assistance, but it is necessary that they work with First Nation peoples, and it is necessary for the community to deal with the issue by first acknowledging it. Chief Charles also qualified what he believes is necessary when culture and language is spoken of as an issue. He introduced his point by stating that he is proud of his heritage and is definitely not in favor of losing his language.

> I think the kids today have to live in two worlds if they are going to compete with mainstream society. There is no going back to how it used to be. We are forced to live in the society that we are in and we have to make the adjustments. Kids have to make those adjustments. We as First Nations have to make those adjustments, otherwise, we are standing in line as the rest of the world goes by.

With Chief Cameron there are two primary areas that are of concern to him and his council. The first issue relates to special needs students and the services that are required to provide an education to these children. The second area is curriculum development and incorporating Aboriginal content. Chief Cameron spoke of attending several meetings with his school administration and elders when discussing the topic of what they want their schools to do and to become. "There is a bit of a struggle in terms of incorporating Aboriginal content into the Alberta curriculum and the development of that curriculum. We are coming up with a nice balance, but it is still in process" says Chief Cameron.

As is evident from the responses, there are a significant number of issues that were identified by, and of concern to the participants. The responses from the Alberta Education participants can be grouped into two categories, educational or instructional, and political. From an educational and instructional perspective, the participants from Alberta Education were concerned about

teacher preparedness, parenting skills, the lack of curriculum that reflects a Native perspective, and the fact that there is little or no attempt to teach the current curriculum from a Native perspective. Politically; downloading of responsibilities, control, partnerships, and clarification or roles and responsibilities were of concern.

The Superintendents/Directors responses reflected some of the issues identified by their Alberta Education colleagues. In particular, teacher training or preparedness, teacher sensitivity and control of education were common issues. In addition, participants from this category of respondents identified transition of governance structures, maintaining cultural values and having mainstream society understand the First Nation culture as areas of concern.

The teachers/principals interviewed similarly identified educational and political issues. Educationally; curriculum, student retention, duplication of educational services and teacher stress were issues that need addressing. Politically; self-government initiatives and finance were identified.

The elders identified parental involvement and control of education as the issues that required resolution. The Chiefs centered their responses on the issues of student needs, educational services, curriculum, language acquisition and curriculum development.

2. Provincial Education Authority As A Partner, And Their Role.

With the participant issues identified, the schedule turned to trying to determine if there is a place for the province in First Nation education, and if so, what this role could be.

Alberta Education Officials

The role the province could play in a partnership generated interesting responses. This is because there was an assumption, on my part, that as employees of Alberta Education these participants would see a definite involvement. Ann's initial response to provincial involvement in a partnership was "no." "I would have so say no", said Ann. "I would think that the First Nations would say no because First Nation leadership want to maintain the idea

behind federal Band controlled schools." Ann further qualified her statement by adding, that First Nations have to be involved with the province because of the curriculum ties with Alberta Education, curriculum standards, and teacher certification. "I would think that they would want the province involved but with a very limited amount of involvement. Maybe they could be involved as facilitators, sharing information, but that is it."

Ann, was of the opinion that Alberta Education could take a lead role in supporting First Nation education. She felt that it would be nice if Alberta Education would "go out and do workshops on all the new things that are happening in education. What the province used to do was publish information pamphlets on the new initiatives that were happening in Alberta Education."

In the area of curriculum, Ann expressed a desire for Alberta Education to become involved, not just in the development of curriculum for Aboriginal children, but also in the development of curriculum for all Alberta students that show First Nation people in their true light rather than the way they are presently portrayed.

Andy was candid in his response, but he was also cautious. He felt that there is a role for the province and listed many ways that it should be involved. However his caution was one that highlighted undefined roles. He felt that there had to be more provincial involvement and this provincial involvement initially had to be at the government level. Stating that he did not wish this to sound like a government position, he felt that it was very difficult for government departments to speak because "if we speak about things that are not an official government position we are in big trouble." This, in his opinion, necessitates the provincial government making their position very clear "so that people in various departments, whether it is justice or education, can deal directly with First Nations. If the roles were delineated we could play an active role in assisting First Nations." As an example of this, Andy questions the progress made since the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the province and Treaty 8 Chiefs in 1993. "Where is it now?"

Andy offered several areas where he felt that a partnership, with defined roles, could be of educational benefit. These areas included language development, in-service, programs plans, tuition agreements and early childhood services.

> Look at the Native Language materials that Alberta Education is developing. The federal government is not doing it, the province is doing it. So the province is already contributing to First Nation education. We also do the in-service. The "feds" do not have the money. They provide some money to the Bands for that, but Alberta Education does a significant amount of in-service on language for the First Nations.

Andy pointed out that Alberta Education was also working with some of the First Nation schools on their program plans. Program plans are outlines of courses taught, and list the number of hours a year committed to various subject areas.

Tuition agreements were another area where Andy felt Alberta Education could play a role. He noted that there was a need to assist First Nations and school jurisdictions in the development and negotiation of reciprocal tuition agreements. He is of the opinion that "we have a long way to go in this area because for years, tuition agreements went one way only. Now they are coming back the other way, where the non-native kids are attending First Nations schools."

Andy also expressed the opinion that many First Nation schools do not have the expertise to deal with some specialty areas such as Early Childhood Services. His experience demonstrates that First Nation schools are not accessing available services and further to this he believes "Alberta Education does a limited job in terms of working with First Nations to deal with these kinds of problems."

Allan concurred with his colleagues that there is a role for the province to play in First Nations education. However, his view was more general. He saw a provincial government role, and a role for all government, that called for understanding. Allan is of the opinion that all governments must take steps to ensure that we "understand ourselves." Allan explained that because we come

from such varied and diverse backgrounds "the more we understand about those backgrounds the more helpful it is for all of the people we deal with."

Allan drew on the political comparison between the English and French Canadians and the Sovereignty Association desires to support his views on this issue. He is of the opinion that concerns arise because we do not understand one another and he believes that "it is imperative that we have as, Canadians and Albertans, a better understanding of our cultural roots and our identities, and a knowledge of how we got where we are." It is because of this that Allan feels that "yes the province definitely has a role."

Allan is of the mind that there is a strong role for the province especially in terms of outstanding land claims. We cannot "allow the number of First Nation communities to live in the conditions they do." In order for these settlements to be realized "there will have to be understanding from all Albertans and Canadians."

Superintendents/Directors of Education

Stan had one response when asked if Alberta Education should be involved and what role could they play in a partnership and in potentially helping resolve issues facing First Nation education; "get involved." Stating that he does not wish to sound flippant, he is at the same time of the opinion that the province "often comes to us with a big brother attitude but when the crunch comes they tend to point to someone else rather than getting involved themselves. 'Go over there', is often their response." Stan offered his experience with Alberta Education and the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) initiative as an example to support his claim of how Alberta Education often reacts.

> Alberta Education really want to get the Band schools involved with Career and Technology Studies as much as they can because right now it is one of their prime initiatives. But, if we say we only want to have this component; if we say we do not want to instruct in English, we only want to instruct in Cree, I know darn well we are going to be facing a wall, and the province will back out.

Stan also shared another area of frustration he has encountered when dealing with the province. This frustration related to the provincial diploma exams and

achievement tests and the fact that the province is providing very little guidance and support, even though they encourage First Nation schools to have their students write these exams. "When we phone down and try to register, we get shunted between two or three people. When we phone down to get things, we get the run around. We do not see a lot of things coming from them."

However, Stan was of the opinion that the province should be involved in First Nations education. At the time of the interview, he was of the opinion that they, meaning the First Nations, are doing a considerable amount to get something started in this area, and the province should definitely be involved. The area of involvement he sees for the province is "making sure, and assisting us in ensuring we have enough of the same resources that everyone else has or is getting." His justification for this is that First Nations are members of the province. "The province tends to think we are not at times but we are Albertans" said Stan.

Stan also saw a need for involvement with the province because of the relationship many First Nations have with provincial school jurisdictions. Many First Nations send children off the reserve to attend provincial schools. The cost of this arrangement is impacted by provincial grant regulations and funding decisions. This has an effect on First Nations who use provincial services, because proportionate costs are billed to First Nations. As a result Stan feels that "if the province is going to make decisions that are going to affect the area we live in, whether its transportation or whatever, then we should be involved."

In Sidney's opinion we would have to walk right through the hierarchy of what it is that Albert Education does in order to answer this question. He believes that provincial involvement could start at curriculum, as Alberta is developing and approving guides for curriculum standards. His question is, "how sensitive to First Nations are the standards?" Right now he believes that "there are incredible gaps right across the curriculum in materials that are culturally relevant and supportive of curricular standards." This is an area where the province could play a significant role. Sidney recognized that people in Alberta Education have been doing a considerable amount of work in this area but, he

still has serious concerns, because the reduction of provincial educational spending has caused the "capacity of Alberta Education to be seriously reduced." He added that "if there is anything that Alberta Education could do presently to support First Nations education, it is to go right back and invest in what they were doing up to a number of years ago, but have since pretty much stopped."

Sidney is of the opinion that "in association with Advanced Education and the universities who are charged with the responsibility for the training of teachers and their certification, there is a lot that could be done in the post-secondary area to support First Nation and Aboriginal education."

Sidney believes that teachers graduating from universities stand a better chance of getting a position in an Aboriginal environment than they do in a mainstream environment. But "in the initial days of their training nothing is done to foster a greater understanding of Aboriginal culture and the First Nations through their training." The end result is that "we take people that are trained for white, mainstream, urban schools, across the street from where they grew up, and now they find themselves on reserves in the far reaches of northern Alberta, dealing with, and teaching a completely different group of people."

Sidney was also concerned about the granting of permanent teaching certificates. First Nation schools are hiring more first year teachers than probably any other jurisdiction in the province, and, they do not always have Directors of Education that can recommend a permanent certification for a teacher to Alberta Education. The difficulty Sidney has with this is the fact that Alberta Education requires a recommendation from someone who holds a Masters degree. He contends that as a result of this qualification Alberta Education "is ignoring First Nation educators who have education degrees and a whole lot more community experience than someone from outside the community who holds a Masters degree from any faculty." In Sidney's opinion we could overcome this problem, and others, if we "wake up."

Steven's experiences have led him to the opinion that Alberta Education is very cooperative and open to dealing with First Nations. He noted that the

province already provides a number of services to First Nation communities, "services that the province is not required, by law to provide." In his opinion, there is not much more the province could do, because that would be simply substituting a different government. He did however state that the province should make available to First Nations the services of the provincial government, and these services should be offered on a cost recovery basis.

Simon visualizes a role for the province, but it may never materialize because "of the Treaties and the province not understanding First Nations and not taking the initiative to understand them." Simon also informed me that since he has taken on the position of Director of Education he has attempted, on his own, to open the doors with Alberta Education. He then informed me that this was not a good move on his part, and he inadvertently risk losing his job, because he was not following the correct cultural or political protocols. The correct political protocol required him to involve the elders of the community, and these elders are of the opinion that "we do not deal with the province. We deal with the Federal Government of Canada."

However, Simon is of the opinion that his First Nation should not limit itself to just dealings and negotiations with the federal government and that it should not ignore our next-door neighbors. This is a belief that Simon said he has tried to push. His rationale is because "the old idea of isolating ourselves from our next door neighbors, our relatives, the Metis, should not be continued. We have to work hand in hand somewhere down the road. I think that a partnership role could be very useful for the province."

Simon qualified his position by pointing out that he believed that the provincial people have to understand where the First Nations people are coming from, and what it is that First Nations really want. To illustrate his point on how First Nation people and their culture are not understood, Simon offered the following story.

> I was listening to the news report last night that the British Columbia Indians wanted to get back into whaling. The media blew everything out of proportion and said that the Indians will make millions of dollars out of this, and that now, just as the whale population has established itself and

> will not be extinct, the Indians want to start killing them. I agree with their Chief. They are not trying to be millionaires. It has nothing to do with economics. It is the cultural value of hunting whales as our forefathers have done before us. It would not be a mass slaughter. We were all laughing at that one. Yea, I think the province could be involved and have a lot to say on First Nations. It is to their benefit.

Regarding education specifically, Simon felt it would be beneficial if the province sat down with the First Nations and discussed their curriculum. Ask the First Nation leaders what they want to do. This according to Simon would be a benefit to everyone because "we have never been formally educated about our own First Nations in this country." Curriculum for Simon is an obvious "area for involvement."

Cost sharing is another area that is of concern for First Nations, in Simon's opinion. He noted that there are a number of First Nation children attending provincial schools, off reserve. As a result, it is necessary for First Nations to sit down with provincial school jurisdictions. This, as he sees it, poses a certain difficulty for the province because of their understanding of treaties and whom the province has had to traditionally deal with regarding such matters. The trend with tuition agreements is to negotiate bilateral rather than the traditional tripartite agreements. In order to successfully negotiate agreements Simon believes that " the province has to set aside the mentality that the treaties are signed with the Federal Crown and that is who the province has to deal with rather than individual First Nations." This is a mindset that according to Simon "has to go away if successful partnerships negotiations are to be reached."

There were two more areas in which Simon thought that cooperation would be beneficial, however, these areas require flexibility on the part of the province and a willingness to customize, to fit a particular set of circumstances. These two areas are programs and testing. Based on Simon's experiences, the province has no interest in, or does not wish to customize or adapt programs. "The province believes uniformity is the key to consistent results." However Simon is of the opinion that the province should sit with the First Nations and "adjust a number of the programs offered in provincial schools to accommodate

First Nations." This he sees as being to the advantage of both the province and First Nations as it would help promote education as well as understanding.

Simon is expecting the same rigid response from the province, when it comes to the area of achievement testing. There is a philosophical difference that has to be appreciated. According to Simon, the elders of his community "question who are we to judge what a child knows and what they should know." The elders believe that "every year a child learns. There is no doubt about that. The elders are right. Our testing is not that way." Our testing does not reflect this. Our testing is "did you learn what we wanted you to learn. There is a difference."

Teacher/Principals

Curriculum, language, achievement assessment, accreditation and certification and communication, were foremost on the minds of the teacher/principal participants, but these were just some of the areas in which this group of participants felt there was a role for the province to play. It was generally agreed, among all of the participants, that the province had a substantive role to play.

Achievement and student assessment appeared to be of concern to all First Nation educators. When speaking about assessment Tina said she had some real problems with assessment and how and why it is done.

> I have an Educational Psychologist come in and do assessments. We go through the motions of having a child labeled as being mentally handicapped, physically handicapped, or behaviorally disordered. We go through the game to get the funding, however, I will not identify 10% as being handicapped in any way, or being learning disabled in any way, just because I want funding. Some of our students are English Second Language speakers and require ESL support, but being a Cree speaker does not make them disabled.

Trish also expressed a desire to see cooperation in the area of special need students, assessment and funding for these students. According to Trish the special needs area is becoming very challenging for First Nation schools, and as a result, they need more resources. Resource development is possible "if we

work together to set up a cooperative system to develop resources that are acceptable to the province's standards as well as our own."

Tammy also expressed an opinion that evaluation and assessment was an area to be addressed in First Nation schools and that the province could play a role. "In many First Nation schools you can go from classroom to classroom and you will see many different things" stated Tammy. "Unlike some of the more successful schools in the public school system, where they focus only on academic achievement and excellence." Successful schools, according to Tammy "focus on one key area that is addressed as a school and by all participants. The province could help our First Nation schools in this area."

Terry echoed these opinions and felt that the province could assist with assessments. Utmost on his mind was that the province could help "ensure that certain standards are maintained and that First Nation schools receive accreditation."

Accreditation was also of concern to Tina, however her view of the role for the province in this area was not for the province to ensure standards, but rather one of accepting the standards set by the First Nation. Tina sees accreditation as a practical tool. It is her vision to see First Nation students given the "same opportunity or freedom to move within Alberta or Canada, or any other country, and to be given the same credits as any other student in this province." To Tina however this should not mean Provincial Achievement Tests and diploma examinations. What there should be from this province, in Tina's vision "is a recognition of the instruction that takes place in First Nation schools."

Trish concurred with Tina's view on accreditation, but saw an extension to the role of the province, as one of being supportive and accepting to First Nation schools and their curriculum initiatives. To accomplish this she saw an involvement of governments, both First Nation and provincial, working in a partnership "to develop and support an educational system that is specifically First Nations, and to assist in developing a curriculum and a viable First Nation school system."

Trish visualizes many necessary changes taking place with First Nation education and all will result in a school system that does not mirror, or resemble, our traditional school system. When this happens, she would like provincial involvement, acceptance, and more importantly provincial recognition. She would like to see the province take a serious look at changing the school system and to become "fully supportive of a First Nations' school system and to accept it as a viable system."

Theresa informed me that she had a particular perception regarding the provincial government's perception of First Nations' schools.

> I always have the impression that the province considered First Nations' schools as kind of their poor relative, their kind of backward relative that was just tolerated and they tried to attract our best students. I think that perception is changing. With a lot more people on the First Nations councils and boards that are articulate and demanding more from the tuition agreements, changes are happening. I think we need to be treated as equals and not as your poor backward relative.

Provincial Achievement Tests, and the use of these tests in First Nation schools, generated interesting responses. Tammy felt that this is probably the biggest issue that needs to be addressed and that the province needs to be involved. Tammy would like to see Alberta Education "go and work with First Nation schools and assist at improving that testing instrument, because this is the standard of measurement in this province."

Tammy recognized that the Provincial Achievement Tests put First Nation students at a disadvantage, and this primarily, is why she would like to see cooperation with First Nations. She wants the First Nations schools to ask themselves "whether or not they should continue to administer their testing? What else could accomplish the same purpose? How can it be improved?" However, Tammy did state "when you live in a province that uses achievement tests as their measurement tool, then we are at a disadvantage."

Tina's sentiments on the usefulness of examinations for First Nation students was similar to Tammy's. According to Tina the only reason why "we wanted achievement tests was to give us an idea of how we were doing in terms

of the public school system." However Tina questions where are the achievement tests that will test cultural aptitude?

Tina was also of the opinion that the testing in this province should not be compulsory for everyone, and that only those students who were taking an academic route should be exposed to the test. She believes that "putting all students through an examination and saying you are, and you are not academic, is not right. Not everybody is academically inclined. So why put everybody through this process?" In addition, Tina was of the opinion that these tests are not a realistic measure of a student's ability. "We went through the grade 9 achievement testing when I was going through school in the '60s and I never did well. It did not stop me from going to university."

Curriculum, and curriculum development, particularly in the area of Native language, was on the minds of many of the participants in this group. Terry was of the opinion that the province could be of valuable assistance in this area by "providing technical assistance and financial support for the development of community based curricula." In addition to this, he felt that the province could provide support services especially in the adaptation of their curricula to meet the needs of First Nation students.

Theresa recognized that the province has, in some respects, taken a lead role in curriculum development, but at the same time she recognizes that much more needs to be accomplished. This lead role is important to First Nations because "the Bands do not always budget a lot of money for curriculum development and a lot more needs to be done."

Tina's views on the role of the province in curriculum development supports Theresa. Tina, like Theresa, would like to see more done in the area of language materials. However, she also expressed a disappointment that with the development of a second language program nothing further was done to ensure its use and effectiveness. To support her view she mentioned the Language Services branch of Alberta Education. As relayed by Tina this branch "developed Cree and Blackfoot second language programs, but then when it came to developing support materials nothing was out there. It would have been

really helpful and supportive if they had developed resources as well." Tina felt that a supportive, facilitative role must be taken by the province. There needs to be a follow-up to development of a curriculum.

In addition to her views on curriculum support, Tina mentioned a related area where she felt the province could be doing more, or at the least doing things differently. Here Tina again directed her views to Language Services branch of Alberta Education and the Native Education Project and offered this suggestion.

> Why not combine these two units and instead of calling it a project, make it a branch. Call it a Native Studies branch or a Native Education branch and give it the importance it deserves, because it is not doing anything for Native education.

She is of this opinion because the project has been in existence since 1980 and it hasn't grown. "This is a really loud statement. There is no integration, there is no promotion, and there is no partnering with Language Services. There is no real faith in what Alberta Education is doing."

Thomas' view on curriculum and the province's role was somewhat different. He did not view development as the real issue, rather his concern was for continued consistency and quality in curriculum and instruction and felt that "Aboriginal educational authorities should continue to contract curricular assistance from Alberta Education." This is necessary in Thomas' view in order to ensure consistency and quality of curriculum and instruction for First Nation schools."

Communication was also an area where many of the participants felt that there was not only a role for the province but there is also a need provincial involvement. Terry saw a need for technical and pedagogical support from the province and added that an educational position, similar to that of an Education Manager should be created, "to act as a liaison between First Nations and Alberta Education." Thomas also felt that communication was essential. In fact he believes that communication should be the basis for a partnership and that "this partnership should be based on sharing of knowledge, services, and professional liaison."

Tammy is of the opinion that a lot of the First Nation schools are not aware of many of the initiatives, the recent trends, or the latest developments in education that are taking place within the province, because there are not many established communication lines between first Nation schools themselves, nor between First Nation schools and Alberta Education. She found out this year in doing research and visiting public schools "that a number of teachers in First Nation schools were unaware of many initiatives such as the Classroom Assessment Materials Project (CAMP) and the Western Canadian Protocol." Tammy credits this to a "break between First Nation schools and the province." She found that there is not a lot of interaction between the two.

As a teacher in a First Nations school, Tammy expressed a need for communication with Alberta Education. She believes that "if we want our children to function within the mainstream society, we need to keep that contact." She also stated that the role the province should play is one of consulting as Alberta Education "have a lot of specialists, a lot of expertise that is not now necessarily available to First Nation schools or to First Nation staff." The motivation and reasoning for this direction is a matter of professional ethics for Tammy. She is of the view that as educators "we have a professional obligation to ourselves and to our students to keep informed and up to date with what is happening." This is necessary, in Tammy's view, in order for First Nation schools to be comparable.

The participants in this category also identified a number of individual areas that they felt were worth consideration as roles the province could potentially provide to First Nations in a partnership agreement. Tina identified what she termed technical considerations. The first one related to students. She is of the opinion that she would like to have "students registered with the province, as well as Indian Affairs." Such registrations would, at the very least, in Tina's opinion give students the "freedom to move to any jurisdiction and to be recognized as having come from a place as good as any public school system."

Theresa had a role for the province that is somewhat similar to that proposed by Tina. She was of the opinion that Alberta Education has a human

resources expertise that could fulfill a teacher referral role. People are presently filling this void by word of mouth. Theresa is concerned about some of the staff that First Nations' schools hire. The problem that Theresa is referring to is the difficulty that some First Nation schools face when recruiting teachers. Too often Bands hire teachers that cannot find employment elsewhere, or teachers who have not had successful teaching experiences with provincial jurisdictions. Theresa also believes that many of these teachers filled senior educational positions and this has caused further problems, educationally, for First Nation schools. The problem identified by Theresa is further compounded, in her opinion, by the fact that many of these teachers move from one First Nation community to the next. Within the First Nation community, Theresa says, they have a name for these people, "we call them rounders. People that go around and get a job here, take a contract there for a year, and everybody hates them so they move on to the next reserve."

Theresa also expressed a disappointment in the number of First Nations' people working with Alberta Education. She stated that there "are not enough Aboriginal people employed with Alberta Education." Hiring of more Aboriginal personnel would in her opinion help Alberta Education "gain the trust of the First Nation community."

Elders

For the most part, the elders were cautious of any discussion on a role for the province in a partnership with First Nations' education. Ernest expressed this when he responded.

> Who did we deal with when the treaties were made? The Federal Government. There was no such thing as Alberta and the Provincial Government. That came after. I call the province "Just a Baby." The province is just a little guy that was born the other day, 1905. Regarding our schools and education, that was promised by the Federal Government.

Ernest is cautious of the provincial government's involvement because it could be seen as "downloading" on the province by the Federal Government. He expressed his opinion this way. "As a baby, they are getting the worst from the

'Big Daddy' over there. That's what is happening even today. Yes, the Federal Government is using the province and the dirty work falls on us."

Eunice's response was very similar to Ernest's. When asked if there was a role for the province to play she responded by asking if that meant "we wouldn't be Federal anymore." She wanted that clarified and wished to be ensured that it did not mean giving up any of the rights and commitments guaranteed by the Federal Government.

Eunice was very much aware of the Federal Government's *White Paper* (1969) and the intentions of the Federal Government of that time, and as a result is cautious of any involvement by the province. One area where Eunice did feel the province could assist First Nations' education was with exposing students to off reserve educational and employment opportunities. The one thing that she wanted to see in First Nation schools was "an exposure of our students to other places so they can see what it is outside of the reserve for them."

Eunice also spoke of the province assisting in teacher in-service and development particularly in the area of language retention. She recognizes that we are now in a fast world, when in her time it was, as she described, "a kind of a slow, slow pace." This pace she sees as a threat to her language. To help counter this, Eunice recognized the fact that they have a lot of Cree speaking teachers on staff, but it is becoming increasingly "more difficult to teach, now the kids talk English and the parents talk mostly English to their children." This is the teacher in-service and development that Eunice saw Alberta Education facilitating. "The Cree language is my language and I will treasure it for the rest of my life." What you say in your own language has so much more meaning than trying to translate."

Elizabeth, as well, did see a role for the province, a role that made use of provincial educational expertise. She was of the opinion that First Nations "need people who know what education is about and who know why it is necessary." Education, especially of children, is a priority for First Nations in her opinion and Alberta Education could offer assistance.

Elizabeth also saw a role for the province when it came to school construction and the kind of schools that should be built. She is of the opinion that the province is more generous when it comes to school buildings. More importantly than construction, however, Elizabeth is of the opinion that the province could play a greater role in assisting First Nations' children who attend provincial schools. It is Elizabeth's experience that "when Native children go to other schools, there is no orientation to the school or community nor with the people that are taking our money for the education of our children." She cited examples of choosing programs, the different activities available, and the courses the students want to take. It is her observation that "our students never seem to have a choice." Even if they want to do something different she continued "they always tell our students that there is no room." She concluded her observations by wondering "if there is a way someone could speak on behalf of our children."

Chiefs

Chief Charles sees a definite need for involvement by the provincial government and provincial education authorities with his First Nation. However, while expressing a desire for involvement, Chief Charles also set the initial parameters of an agreement and simultaneously makes it known that First Nations have other options available. Even though he states that the province will be the provider of education for his membership he states he is aware that "the option of Band control is readily available and we are not afraid to go that route either." Chief Charles admits that his community's decision was based on his experiences with the school jurisdiction that they have an agreement with, "an agreement that allows them to deal with issues that they could not deal with before."

In thinking of ways to resolve issues, Chief Charles was quite definitive in expressing the view that there needs to be more authority given to the communities. It is through such delegation that communities would then be able "to determine direction, and work out their own problems." He is of the opinion

that the "province can delegate more authority to jurisdictions who can then, in turn, delegate more to the community." He cites the agreement he has with a provincial jurisdiction as an example, "we now have control over policies and control over the education of our children because of our agreement."

Chief Charles also spoke of another area crucial to First Nations' education where he considered the province to have a role to play, and that is in the area of teacher training. According to Chief Charles, funding is required in order to put "Native teachers through university to get their teacher certification." He is of the opinion that having Native teachers would help alleviate the high turnover rate among teachers in First Nation communities.

This Chief is also very aware of the importance of defining roles for all players in a partnership. With this said, he is of the opinion that First Nations, and his Nation in particular, "still need some support from the province in terms of resources needed, and the people who come in and assist us, the Chief and Council, in the running of our school."

Chief Cameron responded positively to the notion of a provincial educational authority becoming involved in First Nations' education. He saw a role that included, "providing information to reserve schools, providing resources and expertise in curriculum development, and assisting in teacher education initiatives."

While two of the participants expressed a concern about a partnership with the province and suggested a limited role for their involvement with First Nations, the remainder of the participants were unanimous in their support for a partnership and identified roles and areas of potential involvement for the province.

Of concern to all categories of participants were the areas of curriculum development and support, particularly curriculum that reflects aboriginal peoples in a true light; pedagogical and technical support, language acquisition and student achievement.

In addition to these common areas, Alberta Education officials identified administrative and teacher facilitation and offering workshops and sharing of expertise as potential roles for their organization to play in a partnership.

The superintendents/directors, also identified teacher training, tuition and reciprocal tuition agreements as need areas where the provincial educational authority could play an essential partnership role.

The teachers/principals in discussing roles for a provincial education authority in a partnership, further identified accreditation of First Nation schools, special education, assessment and more open communication with Alberta Education.

As with the teachers/principals, the elders were also interested in in-service and the educational expertise that presently exists but are not readily available to First Nation schools. In addition, the elders raised the potential for the federal government to "download" some of their responsibilities to the province once partnerships are entered into with a provincial agency.

The Chiefs were just as cautious as the elders. However they felt that if clear responsibilities and parameters were defined, then a role of sharing of educational resources and expertise by the province, particularly in the area of teacher education and development, would be of benefit to First Nations.

3. Other Educational Agencies In A Partnership.

The other educational agencies spoken of during the interviews were primarily the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), and the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA). There were two reasons why these agencies were spoken of. First, these were the two organizations that I was particularly interested in receiving an opinion on from the participants regarding a potential role in First Nations education, and secondly, the ATA and the ASBA are the two most visible educational support organizations in Alberta, and the two that are most often referred to by educators and trustees.

Alberta Education Officials

There was not unanimous agreement among the officials from Alberta Education on this question. In fact, Ann preferred not to express an opinion on this topic because she felt she was not qualified to answer. She did, however, express an interest in this area. "I would really be interested to find out how the Band operated systems feel about this and what they see as a role for other agencies. The Bands are the ones accessing the information from the outside."

Andy, on the other hand, felt that this was another hot political topic for many First Nations and expressed an opinion of how First Nations feel toward one organization in particular, the ATA. He was emphatic in his statement that "First Nations certainly do not want the ATA involved." He also questioned why First Nations would want ATA involvement. He sees their involvement "as taking away a lot of the power First Nations now have."

He felt differently about organizations such as the ASBA and the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS). He is of the opinion that there is some partnering now between these organizations and First Nation educational institutions. "The Directors of Education for First Nation schools attend CASS regional and zone meetings. This is partnering." He was also of the opinion that extending this cooperation would be a good idea. As an example of partnership Andy spoke of how Northland School Division No. 61 has already started partnerships . Before Northland, according to Andy, "on reserve Treaty Indians did not vote in school board elections and they did not sit on school boards. Now, because of Northland, this door is open." He is of the opinion that "eventually First Nations will look at a parallel organization to the ASBA, or be a separate part of that organization."

Allan drew a distinction between on and off reserve students. He is of the opinion that both the ATA and ASBA are providing good services to Aboriginal children attending provincial schools, as they do for all children attending the provincial school systems. For on reserve schools Allan was of the view that "there are some Band operated schools that may not need to be involved, but I do think that there is a level of support to involve the ATA and ASBA." He

expressed a hope that there is a role for the ATA and ASBA in some First Nation systems.

Superintendents/Directors of Education

Steven explained that the anti-union bias has not come about because of anything the ATA has done. Rather it came from the experience that the First Nations have had with the Federal Government. He relayed this story.

> The Federal Government operated our schools and the teachers were members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. That is where this anti-union attitude comes from. There were incompetent teachers that Indian Affairs hired and the reserves could not get rid of them. So they said, "If this is the way the unions operate then when we take over our educational system, we are not going to have anything to do with unions."

That is why Band teachers are not full members of teachers' associations. With this brief and interesting history to qualify his statements, Steven believes that there is room for provincial educational organizations in First Nations education. He is under the impression that a few of the reserves in Saskatchewan are now members of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. The reason for this, he believes, is that "First Nations find that this gives them some access to information and procedures and things that they would not ordinarily have available. So they are associate members and they find this advantageous."

His experience has shown him the same thing in Alberta, and teachers of on-reserve First Nation schools being associate members of the ATA. Again the Bands find these arrangements to be "advantageous for information distribution and in keeping current with curriculum." However he believes that First Nations "do not want full memberships and they do not want the union involved."

Stan, responded to the idea of involvement of other provincial educational organizations, in much the same fashion as Steven. He also felt that there was a provider role for these organizations to play. In fact Stan is presently negotiating with the ATA because "they have one thing we are very interested in; Specialists Councils." Stan believes this is one of the things the ATA does well and it is an area "where we want to form a stronger bond with the province."

When the issue of membership arose, his response was an immediate and definite "no." His reasoning for this is that even though he sees the ATA as being a benefit in the development of new materials, and assisting in keeping current on new initiatives, he does not want the contractual obligations that an ATA membership would provide for its teachers. "We are doing our own contracts and we treat everyone fairly. We wish to stay with the educational services provided by the ATA."

Regarding the ASBA, Stan sees a role for them in a partnership. Presently his First Nation's education committee is making use of the services provided by this organization, particularly as they relate to trustee development. He believes the ASBA is providing good advice to them, because as a school system, "they are facing the same types of issues as their provincial counterparts." In summation, Stan felt that they wish to make use more of the professional expertise provided by these organizations, rather than their labor expertise.

Simon is of the opinion that the provincial educational agencies such as the ATA and the ASBA should be involved in a partnership with First Nations. He believes that such involvement can help bring about a better understanding of First Nations. Simon contends that many people do not understand First Nations and at the same time it is very easy for these same people to ignore this fact by saying "what is there to understand." He believes that many people see First Nations but "they have never really sat down with the First Nations and talked to them, heart to heart, and tried to get an idea of where they are going and where they want to be." Simon also believes that the educational agencies such as ATA and ASBA should get involved with universities and help put in place courses for teachers that will promote understanding of First Nations.

Sidney, when discussing other provincial educational agency involvement, provided a perspective of why some First Nations may resist such membership in a partnership. Sidney explained, "there is always the fear that these type of sectoral, horizontal support structures, such as the ATA or the ASBA, could at some point in time, intentionally or unintentionally, begin to interfere and impose

on the way the community wishes to be organized and structured by imposing theirs."

Teachers/Principals

Five of the six teachers interviewed were of the opinion that provincial educational agencies, particularly the ATA, had a definite role to play in a partnership arrangement with First Nations. "Absolutely," was Thomas' response. He is of the opinion that such involvement would facilitate mutual growth for both the Band operated and provincial systems. Native education, in his opinion is not well understood and "other provincial educational institutions should be involved to assist everyone become better educators of our children."

Terry expressed a view that such partnerships are necessary, not only to provincial educational systems, but also to First Nations education, because they are another vehicle that would help "maintain teaching standards and assist in the professional growth of school staff."

Trish was more interested in the professional development, which educational agencies could provide, than the labor protection. For the past few years teachers at her band operated school attended the teachers' convention sponsored by the ATA . She commented that the teachers in her system "find that all the specific professional development conferences that they hold are very beneficial to their teaching. So, in a partnership they could be a major resource for teachers."

Tammy felt that there is a definite need for a relationship with provincial agencies, in particular the ATA. She is of this opinion because she believes teachers in First Nation schools need the professional protection. She would like to see the same services offered to Band contract teachers as those available to teachers working in the public school system. A form of professional body was mentioned favorably by Tammy, "because right now teachers employed by First Nations do not have one." She would like to see this because there are, in her opinion, "situations which just would never arise if our teachers were members of

the ATA." Tammy felt that contractual agreements, evaluations and teaching assignments are areas where the ATA could be involved.

With respect to the ASBA, she saw this organization providing a networking role. "There is a need for communication with other educators in the province and often there are not many organizations that can provide this type of communication service. A parallel group to the ASBA for First Nations and Aboriginal communities would be beneficial."

Theresa was also of the opinion that a partnership could involve other provincial agencies. She is however, of the opinion, that the ATA could provide a much stronger role than they presently do as, in her opinion, "they demonstrate a fear of working with any distinct group in society." To support this claim Theresa recounted her experience with the ATA and her initiative of attempting to establish a Specialist Council, an experience that according to Theresa has left a bad taste in her mouth. "I remember that whole initiative of trying to start a specialist council for Native education, Native language, Native teachers and teachers of Native students. People just blocked it every which way." Theresa is of the opinion that "even if we had Native people on the committee it couldn't get through." It is her belief that agencies such as the ATA are afraid to address Aboriginal issues because they are afraid of potential backlashes within the organization given that First Nations are a minority.

The one person who expressed a definite "no" to involvement from the ATA and ASBA was Tina. She believed that an involvement with an organization such as the ATA "does not promote relationships, it does not promote responsibility, and it does not promote accountability." Based on her experiences and understanding "involvement with an organization creates a collective mentality and as a result you can have a lot of incompetent people sitting in the classroom and they are protected by the ATA."

Tina prefers the system and protocols set up within their First Nation education department. She explained the system this way.

> If a teacher has an issue he or she can come and talk with me. If this is not acceptable then he or she can talk with the Education Manager. Their next avenue is the Chief and Council. The Chief and Council can decide,

> "Well sorry, you have to go with what we need. We can't be protecting you simply because you have worked here for two years and you still do not have the trust of the community, you still do not visit parents, and you still can't talk to the students as if they were human beings."

Tina says that "we cannot have those teachers here. We cannot protect people like this."

Elders

In response to the question of other agency involvement, two of the three elders interviewed responded with caution. The only exception to this was Elizabeth. Elizabeth is of the opinion that the ATA could play a role if it did not always appear to support, and defend a teacher, even if that teacher was in the wrong. She is of the opinion that this is a negative way to approach a situation and as a result this approach to teacher discipline has caused her to dislike unions. "If the ATA had stayed with its original mandate of professional development and improving the workplace, then their involvement may be okay. However it has gotten to the point when a teacher makes a mistake the ATA is firmly behind them." Elizabeth can appreciate a need for teacher protection and a need to provide legal services, and she is also aware that the ATA does in fact discipline its members, but she wonders if the ATA could change their approach. "I am sure that the ATA has to stand behind their members, but is there not a way they can do this without making you think that they are protecting a teacher even when they know the teacher was in the wrong?"

Chiefs

Chief Charles is not totally opposed to the involvement of provincial educational agencies in First Nations' education. He does however place restrictions on who should represent such agencies if they did come to be involved in negotiation for a partnership. Chief Charles expressed a view that there are already enough officials to deal with when a partnership is negotiated. He is of the view that if he enters into a partnership with the province or a school jurisdiction then the interests of provincial agencies such as the ATA and the

ASBA "should be represented by the heads of the school jurisdiction, the superintendent, and the chairman of the board of trustees." He has an expectation that the number involved in a partnership should be limited for ease of negotiation, and that senior officials from Alberta Education or a school jurisdiction could represent the interests of and deal with the "other" agencies that may be involved.

Chief Cameron encourages the development of a partnership and felt that there is a role for educational agencies. "We need to reach out to people and groups including the ATA and ASBA, who may have the resources that we need to set up a system on reserve or off reserve, for our membership and students."

This was the most contentious area of discussion thus far as there was no unanimity among the participant groups. This resulted primarily because of the views some of the participants held toward the ATA. Among the Alberta Education officials participants one felt that other provincial educational agencies should be involved in a partnership because they possess a level of expertise from which First Nation schools could benefit. The remaining members of this group felt that any discussion of provincial agency involvement, particularly ATA involvement, was a hot political topic and was best left to Chiefs and Councils, the First Nations' political arm. There presently exists some partnering and sharing between ASBA and CASS and First Nation educational personnel and it was felt that this partnering could be further developed.

Five of the six teachers/principals interviewed supported the concept of provincial agency involvement in a partnership. They cited teacher development, standards, professional growth, professional protection and professional development as areas where agencies could play a role. The one participant in this category who opposed provincial educational agency participation did so because she felt that such agencies promote a collective mentality and do not promote responsibility or accountability.

The elders were open to a limited partnership that centered on professional development and workplace improvement. Similarly the Chiefs were not totally opposed to such partnership involvement. Chief Charles does

want restrictions on the number of partners feeling that agencies involved with a provincial jurisdiction could be represented by the superintendent and chairperson of that jurisdiction. Chief Cameron placed no restrictions on any potential partner stating that he wished to reach out to all agencies that may possess needed resources.

4. The Role Of The Federal Government, The Potential For The Erosion Of Federal Responsibilities If The Province Were A Partner.

With the move toward First Nations' self-determination and the federal government's devolution policies, there exists a potential for the erosion of federal commitments and "downloading" of federal responsibilities to First Nations, unto the province, in partnership agreements.

Alberta Education Officials

The three participants in this category were of the opinion that there is a definite role for the federal government in a partnership agreement. There was also unanimous agreement on their role. Ann thought that the federal government has to be involved as she does not see their involvement subsiding. She does however recognize that First Nations have to decide on federal government involvement. She added that she "would like to see all three levels of government working together, with the First Nations assuming the primary role."

Andy is of the opinion that the federal government has to be involved in one fashion or another, even it is restricted to a funding role. He is of the view that there has to be some consideration given to the delineation of responsibilities and that "the Federal government should have some responsibilities in a partnership, as should the provincial government." He does not see a partnership agreement as an opportunity for the Federal Government to "wash their hands of everything and attempt to download responsibilities on the province."

Allan saw the role of the federal government as one of support, financial support, and moral support. He was also of the opinion that, in reality, we all

have a responsibility to one another "and if a partnership is the best way to do it, then yes, the federal government should continue to be involved."

The fear of "downloading" of responsibility to the province arose during discussions and the participants had a definite view on how any partnership agreements had to be careful not to erode federal treaty responsibilities. Ann said that "when I talked with administrators from reserves, often this is exactly what they feel. Their fear is always that governments are moving down to the provincial level, and as governments do, First Nations are losing more and more of their treaty rights." Thus there is, in Allan's opinion, "a belief that First Nations cannot work with the province because of the potential of losing treaty rights."

Andy shared the same worry about the erosion of rights. His experience has taught him that there are presently two views among Fist Nations on this topic. The first view has some First Nations saying "we have treaties, we will not let the 'feds' off the hook and as long as the province does not want to control us, or take us over, then we should have the province working with us." The second view belongs to others who want nothing to do with the province "because they feel they may jeopardize their existing treaty rights."

Allan is of the belief however that First Nations do not want to go it alone, and to support this view he relayed the following story told him.

> You white people are in the driver's seat, and you are driving the car. Before, we were not even in the car and now you have us in the back seat advising you. There will come some day, a point where we will be in the front seat. We do not want to kick you out of the car, we just want you in the back seat. You advise us, because right now you are the experts.

Superintendents/Directors of Education

Steven is of the opinion that the federal government never really played a satisfactory role when it came to involvement with First Nations, and as a result, he says he is in favor of a reduced role and a refinement of that role for the federal government in First Nations' affairs. The issue of a refinement of the role the federal government should play in First Nations education results from what Steven describes as a contradiction. Steven says a contradiction has arisen, in his opinion, because First Nations are at the mercy of the regulations, the

decisions, and the whims of the federal government. Steven described the contradiction this way. "First Nations have the authority to manage their children's education but, at the same time the federal government has the fiduciary responsibility to fund that education." The contradiction is this. "As soon as you give over control of funding, you give over management as well." As a result someone else is setting the guidelines and the format for education.

At the same time he is under no illusions about the responsibility the federal government has for meeting the right to education guaranteed under treaties, and as a result stated that "the federal government needs to have a reduced role." He is also of the opinion that the federal government shares this view, which is why, he believes, the federal government is moving to block funding First Nation communities. "I see a reduced role that requires a refinement."

Sidney is of the opinion that education is a treaty responsibility and there will always be a role for the federal government. Stan also shares this view and adds that the only change that should result is that First Nations should be equal partners. Interestingly enough, when it came to a discussion related specifically to educational partnerships, Stan was of the opinion that there was no room for the federal government other than in fulfilling its financial responsibilities. The concept of a tripartite arrangement would not work, in his view, as he believes that the two levels of government, federal and provincial, cannot work together. "It is not a case that communities or school jurisdictions cannot work together, but I do not believe governments can."

While the three participants in this category may agree completely on the role of the federal government they share a lingering fear that involvement with the province may erode federal responsibilities, particularly in relation to funding, and this may result in attempts to "download." Sidney, in admitting a certain cynicism in his old age, believes that if partnership support structures were created and operational, "the federal government, administratively, would feel that their job is being done sufficiently to allow them to retreat further into the background." He concurs that there is among the First Nation population "a

significant fear of erosion." As an example supporting this, Sidney mentioned Preston Manning's comments when he expressed his opinion "that all reserves should be turned into municipalities."

Stan expressed the same concern about the erosion of responsibilities, and drew on his personal experiences to make his point on this issue. His experiences have taught him that the erosion of responsibilities is an unofficial practice and is "exactly what governments are doing now. Anytime we get into a gray area with any level of government, is when the fingers start pointing in the opposite directions."

Steven thinks that the federal government would love a partnership with the province but for the wrong reasons. His reasoning for this is because a partnership would enable the Federal Government the opportunity to say "Oh good, now we do not have to pay anymore." Steven explained that many of the First Nations are very cautious because "they don't want to have any kind of an arrangement in place which would jeopardize the treaty relationship, the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government."

Simon looked at partnerships and the federal role from two perspectives. The first perspective was in terms of the traditional treaty right and guarantees and the federal responsibility to continue these agreements without exception or question. The second perspective related to partnership agreements between provincial school jurisdictions and agreeable First Nations. From the first perspective, Simon was of the mind that a reduced role for the federal government was the more beneficial route for the First Nations as long as "we take federal policies and regulations and interpret them the way we want so that they help our membership. We cannot be caught up in regulations, we cannot not do things because "father" in Ottawa is going to take away money if we do something differently." It is for these reasons that Simon insists there has to be a reduced federal role and a more prominent role for the First Nations. He sees regulations as "still a way of assimilating the Indian into mainstream society."

From the second perspective he felt any agreement should be between First Nations and the province, and that the federal government need not be

involved. However Simon placed some provisos on First Nations and suggested that, for varying reasons, not all First Nations are ready to establish partnerships and take on a more independent operation of their affairs. This is because, "many of the First Nation communities have progressed at different rates." He is also of the opinion that those First Nations that are, in the opinion of larger society, behind the rest of society, "are those communities that are closer to the original knowledge and the elders." This knowledge he sees as essential to growth, and is the "basis of growth in any First Nation community." Building on the elders' wisdom and "understanding what the elders are saying will help the community take a view that is all together different, yet beneficial."

Teachers/Principals

There was unanimous agreement from the participants in this category that the federal government should continue its administrative direction of delegating the responsibilities for education, with the exception of fiduciary responsibilities. In addition, the federal government should ensure that the First Nation communities are given all the tools and resources, as well as the financial resources, that are necessary to ensure success.

Respecting the involvement of the Federal Government, Tina took the view that "we are supposed to tell them what we want. They should not be telling us what we have." Tina believes a dichotomy has arisen. The dichotomy is this.

> The Federal Government has well trained mainstream managers who, more often than not, question where the money is going to come from, and what our budget allotment is. The elders on the contrary are saying to us to continue doing what it is we are doing and worry about the money later. Money is a federal responsibility.

Tina sees this dichotomy as interesting, especially when the elders get to the point where they think back about what happened when they were younger and the kind of things they experienced in school. "They now see the kinds of things they would like to have in an educational system and the kinds of things they would like to see the children experience, and they would have loved to have

had." As a result the elders have no qualms placing demands on the Federal Government and insisting on them honoring the treaty rights.

Theresa also supported a reduced role for the Federal Government but felt that bands may disagree with this, because the Bands want the Federal Government to keep their promises and will do everything in their power to ensure that the early treaty promises are adhered to. "I heard a speech the other day that said, very strongly in Cree, that the Federal Government made promises and had to live up to them."

Theresa concurs with the Bands, but believes that the Federal Government should provide the funding to the bands, and that the Bands should be given the power to spend it based upon how a community wishes to expend their dollars, this, in her opinion, is community based education. According to Theresa community based education is "where you give the people their core funding and they decide what they are going to do with the money and they decide how it is to be dispersed in the community." She is also of the belief that this would be the ideal for First Nation communities.

Theresa is also of the opinion that the Federal Government could be involved in a partnership agreement with the province and a first nation but not to the extent that they are involved now, as she believes "they have too much involvement in budgets and too much say in how they are spent." She sees a fiduciary responsibility only, but adds that "community based education has to come from the community." "Write the cheques," she concluded.

Tammy is also of the opinion that the Federal Government should continue reducing its role. She is of the belief that it should play a lesser role and "just stick to the financial administration rather than be involved in the delivery of the whole educational picture." Based upon her experience with band-controlled schools Tammy is convinced that "these schools are in the best position to determine the educational needs of their community and the needs of their students."

Thomas also believed that the Federal Government should play a reduced role in aboriginal education. He sees this as a natural progression because "it

only makes sense, with moves toward self-government and self-control of education, that government involvement be reduced." He expressed the view that in light of the move to self-government "it is crucial that First Nations assuming self-government, establish communication lines with one another as well as the provincial school jurisdictions." It is through such a system that First Nations will be able to access guidance thus enabling them to attain educational autonomy.

In summary, Terry and Trish's comments, though short, reflect the views of their colleagues. There is a role for the Federal Government because there is a treaty obligation. There will always be room for Indian Affairs in any kind of a partnership but, most of those interviewed felt the role should be that of a funding agency.

The fear of downloading and the erosion of federal responsibilities was mentioned, as it was in the other participant categories. However, there was a shared view that the treaties are very specific and a partnership should not erode federal responsibilities.

Trish concurred that downloading is a major concern for First Nations across Canada. To support this claim she spoke of an example of downloading that has occurred in health. While she does not see the same thing happening in education, and she does not expect the same situation to repeat itself in education, she sees this health experience as "an example of what is happening today and why the fear of downloading is justified."

> Some of the services, in what we term as our treaty rights, are being taken away, and there is some argument that these rights were not there to begin with as part of the original treaties. It is very vague in our treaty, so the Federal Government is going to be weeding, and trying to fine tune what they think should and should not be there.

But Trish believes that when education is discussed "our treaty is very clear and as a result I do not expect that partnerships will erode the federal responsibility."

Terry concurred with Trish. He felt that a partnership would give First Nations a stronger voice when dealing with educational matters and that "as long

as the treaties are not rewritten, education will remain the responsibility of the federal government."

Thomas was equally confident of the stability of the treaties and the commitment from the Federal Government to honor them. He feels that with the "move toward self-government and self-determination the Federal Government's involvement should be limited to a funding only capacity." He also believes that if "a Band controlled school wishes to enter into or participate in a partnership agreement, it should be of little concern to the federal level."

Theresa does not share the same view as Thomas. She is of the opinion that downloading and the erosion of treaty rights is the big fear among First Nations, and believes this fear will continue until such time as it is accepted that we are all partners. She doubts, however, that this realization will happen soon, "There appears to be no common meeting ground. It seems we are of two different mind sets, and I do not know if we will ever get together." In order to resolve this situation Theresa stated that "we have to learn to understand one another and bend our ways to meet the needs of the community." Through such a process Theresa believes "that we, as partners could move parallel to one another." She is not optimistic that "such a meeting will ever happen."

Tina was of the opinion that the erosion of federal treaty responsibilities is not taking the form of devolution nor passing these responsibilities on to the province, rather it is a planned process of not providing support for initiatives. The thought that the erosion of federal responsibility is a planned process is interesting, and when this topic was pursued Tina explained it this way.

> The federal government has said to us as First Nations, let's 'work together', but they have not given any indication of the process. They say 'work together' but they do not say how, nor do they, as a government, provide resources so that we can put a process in place.

Tammy's view on downloading and erosion is related to political initiatives that are presently on the minds of many First Nation leaders and these relate to changes that are occurring in the *Indian Act*. She interprets any lessening of Federal Government responsibilities as an "indication of further breakdown of the treaties and the guaranteed rights."

Elders

Ernest started our talk about the erosion of federal responsibilities with the following introduction.

> My forefathers were there, my grandfather was there when the treaties were signed. He heard what they were saying. They had an interpreter, a Metis by the name of Erasmus. They used Cree words, and just two or three paragraphs. As long as the sun rises, and you see it is still rising, as long as the grass grows, it is still growing, go outside and see; as long as the river flows, the other day I walked down to the river and it was flowing fast.

In his opinion this historical fact dispels any notion of the thought of erosion of federal responsibilities.

Eunice remembers attempts by the Federal government to change the intent of the treaties, and she relayed a story of how her father-in-law when he was chief a number of years ago, spoke of the *White Paper*. He would say: "do not let that pass because right now we are well off with the Federal Government. If we lose any of our rights we will not be recognized as before."

Elizabeth's experience has shown her that there is a reason to be concerned because of changes that the Federal Government is attempting to make. Her concern relates to "how the federal government has been chipping away at the *Indian Act* and only in places where people benefited. They are such sticklers for looking after only certain people."

Chiefs

Chief Charles also believes that the Federal Government seems to want to get out of certain areas of service to First Nations but he is not concerned that a relationship with the province is going to erode the federal responsibilities as long as there is "a clear understanding of the role of each party when there is a Chief and Council at a First Nation level, and an education provider that could be provincial." He stated that "the federal government always wants to get out, but the Chief and Council has certain powers and nothing will be eroded if each party understands their role."

Chief Cameron was also of the opinion that precautions could be taken to avoid any downloading or eroding of responsibilities. His, and other Chiefs' experiences, have shown him that they should be concerned. "There has always been a concern since the Federal Government's *White Paper* in 1960, and there is a concern in the Indian community about the Federal Government absolving itself of its responsibilities. There always was that concern and it is still there today." In order to avoid this pitfall Chief Cameron suggests "whenever there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the provincial, federal and First Nation governments, there is always the need to ensure that Treaty rights are protected." The important thing, concluded Chief Cameron, "is to not let this concern prevent First Nations from entering into useful partnership agreements."

In conclusion, most of the participants felt that there was a major role for the federal government to play in any partnership agreement that might arise between the provincial education authorities and First Nations. There was however, an equally strong indication that the federal government should continue its policy of devolution of responsibility for education, to a level of financial commitment and responsibilities only. There was also a distinct concern that any involvement with the province could potentially erode federal responsibilities and that partnerships could provide opportunities for the federal government to "download" some of their commitments to First Nations onto the province.

5. Benefits Of A Partnership With Provincial Education Authorities.

Unless there is a perceived benefit, and unless it is expected that a partnership would improve existing situations then there is little incentive for exploration.

Alberta Education Officials

It was commonly agreed that there is a perception among the public that the achievement results of Aboriginal students are low in comparison to the rest of the province, and the provincial government has expressed, at time, their concern with achievement levels. This is where one Alberta Education official

saw a potential benefit in a partnership. Andy stressed that "this department has a lot of expertise. If we are concerned about achievement, maybe we should be working more closely with the First Nations and helping with this because they are new in terms of operating their own school systems."

Allan was of a similar view. He stated that we should be moving towards a sharing of resources because as he sees it the province is lacking, "in not having a coordinated approach to deal with issues surrounding Aboriginal children or First Nation children they support." He concluded, "we, as a province, do not deal well with children who come from cultures in transition."

Ann believes it is necessary for the First Nations to work with the province on educational matters because of the way the education system is structured.

Superintendents/Directors of Education

Stan, as a Superintendent of a First Nation school system, sees a benefit for his system if they can have accessibility to neighboring provincial jurisdictions and their expertise. He would like to see situations where if the province "has done something of interest to us then we would like to have them come in and show us what it is they did." This way according to Stan "we do not have to go through their learning process and it becomes a much shorter learning curve for us."

Simon sees a benefit in a partnership, particularly for the province, and is of the opinion that if the province is open to learning and understanding First Nations, a partnership will be useful. He believes that the province and First Nations have to work together at some point in time. In order for this to happen however, Simon believes "that the provincial people have to understand where the First Nations' people are coming from, and where it is that we want to go."

The students could be the potential beneficiaries of a partnership in Steven's opinion. He has noted that the wishes of First Nation parents for their children is no different than what all parents want for their children. Parents have told Simon that "we want our children to have the same education as the children in the province, but we also want the Native influence in addition to that." The

one way to achieve this as Steven sees it is to "follow the provincial curriculum and partake in their evaluations."

Sidney saw many benefits of a partnership to his First Nation schools. He saw partnership development as a process that requires fostering. He also saw partnerships as a way for others to see the many things that First Nations do very well, and he was the first to speculate that there may be financial benefits to partnerships. The financial benefit he foresees relates to the fact that "it is incredibly expensive for small independent school systems to afford to bring on line educational psychologists, diagnostic workers, and any type of specialized curriculum and pedagogical support for teachers."

Sidney does not discount the potential for contracting consultants in these areas, but his experience is demonstrating that a partnership option may be more beneficial. Even though the consultant market has opened up, he finds this route to be very expensive. In addition he pointed out that many

> First Nations Education Authorities are quite suspicious of the quality of work they are getting when they go through consultant doors. They are paying a high price and are a bit leery about attesting to the standard of work being performed by these individuals.

From Sidney's perspective an opportunity to contract services from a provincial board that has these services already in place, would benefit First Nations tremendously. In addition to this, Sidney commented that if partnerships are undertaken by provincial school jurisdictions, and they actually marketed a series of services to First Nation's education systems in those specialized areas "these would go a long way towards fostering partnerships that need to be built, assuming of course that these services are not done for profit."

Sidney also noted that there are many things that First Nation Education Authorities are doing very well, that they are well equipped to do, "and these skills and abilities could be extended to provincial education authorities and neighboring school jurisdictions." He is also confident that "there are many, many opportunities for sharing, from facilities, to programs, to educational services." However, in fostering these partnerships, Sidney cautions provincial school jurisdictions that First Nation partnerships will have to be based on a

mutual respect and on equal footing and that provincial partners "have to realize that First Nation schools are doing an excellent job and as a result there are a number of programming opportunities with the First Nations."

Teachers/Principals

Tina sees partnerships extending beyond education, and she draws on the Services for Children initiative as an example where "the provincial government is asking Children Services, Justice, Social Services, Health and Education to come together to form a partnership and work together for the benefit of the children." Tina is of the opinion that if we can show people that we can work together, then this sense of cooperation will grow within the community.

Theresa's response reflected the potential benefit noted by Sidney. She is of the opinion that financial realities are impacting all of the educational community and a partnership could provide a savings to all partners.

Terry believes the benefits are mainly related to curriculum and program delivery. He thought that a partnership should provide for the expertise needed to adapt the current curriculum. His expectation of any partnership arrangement is the "improvement of the delivery of the school program, one that provides resources to First Nations and assists in making the necessary changes, they wish to see, to the current curriculum."

Thomas places a greater expectation on a partnership than most of his teacher/principal colleagues. His expectations are broad and encompassing and he anticipates benefits to both the provincial and First Nations' systems. He visualizes partnership agreements as reducing the feeling of isolation and the feeling that Band operated school educators are on an island of their own. A partnership could be a vehicle that would allow "Band school administrators to share and reflect with their provincial school counterparts." This expectation he sees as mutually beneficial. Thomas also foresees a partnership agreement as a tool to help reduce "racism, stereotyping and the misunderstanding towards Aboriginal people that may exist in some provincial systems." In addition such

agreements would help ensure all students are "afforded the same opportunities for resources and curriculum exposure."

Tammy, as we saw earlier, agrees with the idea of a partnership and believes that the sharing of resources, particularly assessment and curriculum resources, and the sharing of expertise between systems, are the benefits of creating a solid partnership.

Trish commented that the coming together of two parties would be the most beneficial aspect of a partnership. This would provide a forum in which problems could be resolved and "both groups, the First Nations and the provincial education authorities, would be able to come to some positive resolution regarding the education of First Nation students."

Elders

According to Ernest, as far as Indian children attending school off reserve, the Indian people have no say. He summarizes his feelings this way.

> We don't run the schools. We are not on the board. There are no Indians on the school board and they have many of our children. They have everything ready. The curriculum part, everything. We have no say.

He is of the opinion that in a partnership "this could not be the case and we would have an equal say on those decisions that affect our students, and this, would be the primary benefit to a partnership."

Elizabeth also has some very clear ideas about what First Nations want to accomplish and when. According to her, Band control is the objective of her Nation and she believes that most First Nations have a similar goal. "I think that one of the dreams of Native people is to one day have a say in what their children are being taught in school and to be able to control how these students are being treated." In examining the option of a Band controlled educational system for her Nation, Elizabeth was of the opinion that "they could not just dive in", rather after examining all of the details it was agreed that "time was needed to observe and learn, and gradually we will go on our own." She sees a partnership as providing this transitional period for some First Nation schools that are working toward full control of their educational program.

Chiefs

Chief Cameron, when he examines an educational system like Alberta's, sees a system that his First Nation could learn from. The Alberta educational system "has been around for a long time and has shown a tremendous growth and development that has had very positive results on students and communities." It is because of this growth and development that chief Cameron sees a partnership as being of benefit to First Nations because "there is a lot to learn from a system like Alberta's." In addition to this, Chief Cameron believes that many neighboring jurisdictions are "fighting many of the same educational battles and addressing the same educational concerns," as First Nations, and is of the opinion that another potential benefit of a partnership with the province "is being able to do more with the limited resources they both have. As Chief Cameron has stated, "there is a benefit to working a bit closer with our neighbor. We are starting to realize this and we need to reach out."

Chief Charles sees a partnership between First Nations and the province as assisting his First Nation with educational concerns that are common to his and other First Nation communities. He is under no illusion about how some Band operated schools are perceived "by the outside world because of our academic results." For Chief Charles "bringing up the academic test results is a benefit of a partnership that I want to see. The same is true for student retention rates." In addition to these benefits, Chief Charles also sees a partnership as helping to involve post secondary institutions by "determining what role they can play."

In summary, all participants expressed the view that benefits to First Nations and the province could be realized from partnerships. Alberta Education officials felt that a more coordinated approach would be possible when dealing with common educational issues. They also felt that student achievement could be improved because partnerships could make the sharing of resources and educational expertise more accessible.

The superintendents/directors interviewed were equally optimistic about the potential benefits of partnerships. They also saw a sharing of expertise and

resources as a benefit. Such sharing would reduce the learning curve necessary for many First Nation schools that are working in isolation to develop educational programs. A financial benefit could be realized as well, as many First Nation schools are small and cannot afford specialized pedagogical support. Participants in this category also identified benefits for the province. They noted that many First Nation schools are doing an excellent job and have skills and abilities that could be extended to provincial education authorities.

Teachers/principals felt that curriculum development, curriculum specialization, improved delivery of educational programs, reducing the isolation of First Nation schools, and generally working together, were some of the benefits of partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities.

The elders also saw a benefit to partnerships. Partnerships with the province would give many First Nation communities more of a say in educational decisions affecting their children. One elder also felt that a partnership could afford or provide a period of transition as First Nations assume control of educational services and move to self-government.

As with other participants the Chiefs believe that there is a benefit to partnerships if there is a sharing, because we all have the same concerns and are fighting the same issues.

6. Visions, Expectations And Criteria For A Partnership.

This question concerning visions, expectations and criteria for a partnership generated the greatest number of responses. Such responses would indicate that participants visualized partnerships and had a definite desire for partnership agreements if certain criteria were implemented.

Alberta Education Officials

The Alberta Education Officials are of the opinion that many First Nations in this province would like to enter into a partnership agreement with the province, and its educational authority, Alberta Education. They are also under no illusion as to what has to happen in order for a partnership to succeed. Ann

stated that she believes that "information" is the key, and she would like to see a partnership where all resources are shared. She contends that "accessing information, resources and services, and establishing avenues to allow this access is essential." The desire for information and services is consistent with the thought that equal access to both information and resources would have everybody in the partnership on an equal footing.

Andy also is of the opinion that First Nations wish to work with the province on educational issues and initiatives. He believes that in order for any partnership to be successful, there are protocols that Alberta Education will have to recognize and accept. Andy is confident in his belief "that there are many First Nations' people who want the assistance of Alberta Education." However, there are stipulations. First Nations, according to Andy, "do not like it, and do not wish to be told by Alberta Education, that 'you have to do this,' or 'you have to do that', instead of working together to find common solutions and common ways of approaching a situation." These stipulations should not hinder the development of partnerships if, according to Andy, "time to learn and evolve is given."

In support of this, Andy points to Alberta Education's Native Education Project and the fact that this department has worked on many initiatives with First Nations, and all initiatives are quite successful. Andy offers the following as a reason why all dealings are amiable, and as a result, successful.

> In that department, Alberta Education does not tell the First Nations what to do. We wait for them. The First Nation will come to the department and we will listen, and it is amazing how far, and how quickly things will move to a central point and we find a common ground. We do not tell the First Nation what to do, so they are willing to negotiate. This is going to have to happen in a partnership, and if it does it will be great.

Alberta Education, according to the officials who were participants in this study, is of the opinion that the province wishes a collaborative approach when working with First Nations because, in this way "no one person is in a position of power over another. The locus of power is not with the bureaucrats or the First Nation. It becomes a shared approach." Andy ended his views on the expectations of a

partnership by reiterating that this kind of approach, an equal and collaborative approach, will work.

Allan shared his colleague's views that a partnership must not, in any fashion, place one group ahead of another. He is also, of the opinion, that it has to be understood that there is no one agreement that, after completion, should be applied to other First Nations, nor should there be an expectation that one successful agreement or a negotiated partnership will apply to all First Nations. Allan's expectation is based on his view that "there are a multitude of First Nations that are small, and in addition to this there is a lack of commonality between them." As a result of this lack of commonality Allan expects that "they view their autonomy and their rights very strongly. Thus, a national perspective is not realistic because First Nations are distinct Nations."

Allan also pointed out that, at one time, he was told by his senior supervisors at Alberta Education, that First Nations did not want to be involved with the province. He believes this has now changed, and that shared services are seen as a way to resolve many common issues faced by individual groups in society. There is one more expectation that Allan has for a partnership. He stated that: "it would be his expectation that we would have to determine who is responsible for what. Allan sees this as essential because the inability to determine who is responsible for what has been responsible for the breakdown of many agreements.

Superintendents/Directors of Education

The responses of the Superintendents/Directors of Education were as varied as the personalities of these individuals and communities in which they lived and worked.

Stan had definite expectations for a partnership and, as well, he had a vision that focused on an end product that the province could benefit from, as well as this particular First Nation. He believes, as did Allan, that if the expectations and roles are set out and agreed to then the partnership will flourish. His expectation included resources and support, and the benefit to the

partners will be the end product. Stan wants the partners to provide what his First Nation cannot, "adequate funding, adequate resources, adequate support and access to these resources and supports." In return, for their part, Stan said they "would develop programs and run these programs in our communities." His rationale for such expectations is based on the belief, that this would not only benefit the First Nation communities, but also the province, which is, according to Stan, "responsible for the education of many off reserve First Nation members, but who do not have the personnel nor the expertise to deal with many of the needed programs." Stan is convinced that the province would benefit from a partnership that provided information, resources, and support to First Nations.

Sidney felt that it is necessary to make some preliminary comments before entering into a discussion on the expectations of a partnership. His comments centered on the tendency of governments to rely on bureaucratic procedures to resolve an issue irrespective of the situation or community involved. For Sidney, this procedure involves an attempt to "find the point of most agreement" particularity when First Nation communities are involved. The difficulty with this, in Sidney's experience, is that there are, in Alberta alone, 43 First Nations and

> "the federal and provincial governments are constantly looking for one person to consult with, one organization that they can speak with, or one window of opportunity to take advantage of, in an attempt to take care, simultaneously, of all the issues and problems faced by a First Nation community."

This approach results in failure because, based on Sidney's experience, the communities are saying "no, you have got to come to the community and deal with us at our level."

Sidney's experience has demonstrated that this approach causes problems for the federal and provincial governments, and that they almost have "to be dragged kicking and screaming into the community." Based on this, Sidney is of the opinion that a partnership agreement, and its potential success, "is going to be dependent on the ability of the province to actually come to the community and to get involved with the community." Failure to approach a

partnership agreement with the intent of getting involved in the community and learning to relate to the community, will in his opinion, "create problems and the partnership will surely fail."

Sidney then used his experience with the province to further reiterate his point on the necessity of beginning at the grass roots level. Based on his experiences "when there is a perceived need with a provincial entity to perform a series of functions or honor their responsibilities, there is always an attempt to create one entity that will blanket the entire province." The difficulty with this approach is that it minimizes the number of people involved and it isolates whom most First Nations want involved, their grass root community members. When this happens, according to Sidney, "it does not take too long before these same communities stay away from an initiative because they do not see or hear about it and they are never afforded the opportunity to become involved with the situation or the people involved." As a result, it is not immediate and the community does not identify or relate to the initiative, and in Sydney's opinion "the initiative, no matter how well intentioned "will not work."

The next step in this process is "that of missing the community input." According to Sidney neglecting community input, intentionally or unintentionally, imposes on the way a community wishes to be organized. Based on these points the first expectation that Sidney has of a partnership "is that any partnership has to be localized." When it is localized, when there is a deliberate and sincere attempt to involve the community "then it tells a lot about the kind of structure that is behind the partnership."

Sidney is also of the opinion that the next necessary expectation in a partnership is respect—respect of the partners, equally and together. "If we follow these expectations we will build good linkages."

Steven introduced equality into the expectation discussion. He pointed out that while it is his experience that First Nations want to have dealings with the province, he has learned that an essential component of any partnership is the demand by First Nations that they be "treated as equals." He is certain that at the very least "it has to be demonstrated that First Nations are being treated as

equals and it is not enough to just say it. There has to be a recognition of the First Nation's jurisdiction."

Steven, however, was cautious of the term partnership and wanted to ensure that any definition is qualified when it involves First Nations. He is uncertain if he wants to see partnerships established. A partnership to Steven "implies that there is a legal connection of some kind," and is uncertain as to whether or not First Nation administrators actually want formalized partnerships.

His concern relates to the sharing of jurisdiction and the possibility that a partnership could infringe upon a First Nation's jurisdiction. Steven observed that a "partnership implies more than an agreement, it says that we are going to work together and that we are going to share our jurisdiction in some way." Based on a history of subjugation and broken promises, Steven cautions against such agreements and believes that First Nations will shy away from partnerships based on a shared jurisdiction. He stated that "these are words that First Nations will be very wary of and very cautious of," and that before any partnership is reached "there needs to be understanding."

Simon describes his expectations as ground rules. His first ground rule is based on the fact that First Nation people have had a number of things implemented in their communities and impacting on their lives "without any consideration to the First Nation nor for the impact it could have on the First Nation." As a result of these methods of imposition, Simon stated that the first ground rule would have to be "anything affecting First Nations directly would not only have to be talked about, but also agreed to by the First Nation members, prior to implementation." The second ground rule for Simon relates to "traditional methods of doing thing." As an example of how traditional methods may differ from what is presently accepted as the norm, Simon drew on education and the methods First Nations "may want to use for instruction that would be different from what you presently see in a traditional public school system." The First Nation approach to teaching a child "is not to teach just the child but also to teach everyone in the community." This approach of informing and teaching the community is an extension to the concept of community involvement prior to

making decisions that impact the community. Simon describes this traditional process as essential even though he considers it "an uphill battle." This uphill battle described by Simon is constantly reinforced by the community, and leads to his third ground rule, "maintaining our way of thinking." Maintaining our way of thinking "is essential to building on traditional knowledge and maintaining the traditional values that are the basis to a culture." The fourth ground rule, seen as essential by Simon to a partnership, reflects Sidney's contention, and this must be "involvement by the community and involvement by the parents, in all aspects of any agreement that impacts on them and their children."

Simon also touched on a point raised by Allan and that was the lack of unity among individual First Nations. Simon, while of the opinion that First Nations have to work with the provinces, also sees unity as a dilemma for these same First Nations. The inability of First Nations across the country to unify is described by Simon as a "significant problem that requires resolution," and it is this resolution that causes a dilemma for Simon. Simon's dilemma is based on his conviction that First Nations "all want to stay together and understand one another," and he is of the belief that First Nations can accomplish many of their goals if this understanding exists. However, First Nations "have to deal with the province and each province has its own First Nations. This is the basis of my dilemma." A unity of First Nations could help resolve this dilemma. An expectation, resulting from this partnership dilemma for Simon, is that "there has to be, between First Nations, a sharing of ideas, successes and initiatives." It is this communication between First Nations that would greatly assist partnerships.

Teachers/Principals

Tina stated, "we are welcoming to partnerships that are non-restrictive and open." She insists on caution because she believes that in order for a partnership to be acceptable to First Nations "there has to be an opportunity to exit at any point, if it is decided that we no longer wish to be a part of it."

Tina is also of the opinion that in addition to the opportunity to end a relationship, there has to be an understanding between the partners that

everyone enters on an equal footing. Tina does not want a partnership to be an imposition. She wants it understood that "you do not have to accept somebody else's rules, regulations and ideas just because you agreed to be a partner." In her opinion this "just gets down to the real definition of a partnership."

Tina also expressed further expectations of a partnership. For her, in a partnership, there has to be an understanding on the technical points and everything has to be shared. "Whatever information is developed in the community has to be considered as information available to everyone, and not the property of any one member of the partnership." This expectation arose for Tina because of a past agreement with Alberta Education for the development of curricular material with Alberta Education retaining full copyright of the publication.

Trish emphasized that "partnerships have, in many cases proved to be nothing more than the establishment of another level of bureaucracy and a partnership cannot be this." What is indicative of a good partnership? According to Trish it is the ability "to be able to accept a partnership and say yes, lets do it, this can work, rather than go through countless miles of red tape." It is a "meeting of people rather than a bureaucratic agreement accentuated by tons of paperwork."

Tammy expects that First Nation peoples would have a "key role in defining the relationship, and believes that it is important for First Nation schools and communities to play that key role." In addition, she stated that First Nations "need to look at what they can take from what others have to offer and not just break off ties." She also contends "native people are now in a position to change the educational system. We know this and the communities know this. As a result Aboriginal people have to start playing a key role in the formation of partnerships."

Tammy also has an expectation that a partnership will not start from scratch but rather "will be built on past successes and strengths of partners." She is of the opinion that "groups should not break away by themselves, as some have had a tendency to do because of the mistrust that has arisen over

the years between cultures, rather these groups should examine the successes of others and expand on them. Too often we throw everything away and start from scratch."

Theresa's expectations center around consultation and an opportunity for dialogue. She relayed a story of how she recently received correspondence from a post secondary institution that had decided to proceed with its "northern initiative." It will not work she said, "because there has not been enough consultation with Aboriginal people." In Theresa's opinion, this demonstrates "a lack of respect for the Aboriginal viewpoint, and the Aboriginal way of doing things."

Elders

Elizabeth's expectations for a successful partnership with First Nations are very similar to what has been said to this point. Her list of expectations succinctly summarized the views of previous participants. "Working together" was first on her list. "There is no doubt that this has to be an expectation," she stated. Others included "not being too top heavy. Working with the community, and if it is education, allow the committees to have more input and not just provide an advisory role. Finally, ensure that committees have decision making authority."

Ernest relayed the fact that he has been hurt in the past by listening to government personnel and individuals in positions of authority speak about education. He believes that if we wish partnership, or change, there has to be an opportunity for all parties to come together. A forum must be established that will, in Ernest's opinion allow "all of the people who are in charge of education, all of the provincial and federal personnel, to sit together and really talk about it and thrash it out. Get opinions and talk to one another. Make it a joint venture." Only when all involved have the opportunity to come together will there be, according to Ernest, "real change."

Right now Ernest is of the opinion that "another guy comes around and wants to know about Indians, writes a book, and again there is nothing in it for the Indian. I've been through it."

Chiefs

Chief Cameron and Chief Charles are very much of the same opinion when expectations are discussed and their responses are driven by years of political insight. It is clearly understood, from these participants, that there has to be equality in roles. At the same time Chief Charles made it abundantly clear that jurisdictional authority does not change. In addition, it has to be understood that as Chiefs they have jurisdiction over their individual Nation's membership. With these parameters defined Chief Charles felt that "a clear understanding of the roles of each of the partners is essential especially when a Chief and Council place themselves in a position of dealing with the province." It also has to be understood, according to Chief Charles, that "a partnership is a joint agreement and no one partner has a bigger role to play." The final stipulation or expectation placed on a partnership by Chief Charles was that as a Chief and Council responsible for their membership they "have authority over the children educated."

Chief Cameron is of the opinion that there is a consensus that First Nations should be working with the province and what is needed now is a partnership. What needs to be done, according to Chief Cameron, "is to get sub-agreements." In order to do this, Chief Cameron felt that "getting the Memoranda of Understanding going again and making them alive" is what is presently needed.

Chief Cameron visualizes a partnership that involves the federal, provincial and First Nation governments. He wants the federal government to honor the treaty rights and to transfer the dollars to the First Nations. Additional to this the Chief Cameron speculates that the "arrangements between the three would require an agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding modified to meet our unique needs and roles are defined."

Collectively the Alberta Education officials felt that once protocols and roles were established, successful partnerships would require a sharing of information and resources and provide equal and equitable avenues of access to these resources. It was also stated that blanket criteria cannot be applied to all partnerships as the individuality of First Nations has to be recognized and respected.

The superintendents/directors also mentioned sharing of resources, creating equity of access to information and resources, and cautioned against a uniform approach to partnerships. In addition, the necessity of involving the community, and a caution of not imposing on the way a community wishes to be organized, was raised. Feedback also indicated that the jurisdiction of a First Nation must be recognized, with the First Nation having a control over any decision affecting their nation. As well it was suggested that a mechanism to ensure communication and sharing between individual First Nations would be advantageous.

The teachers/principals added the partnership criteria of non-restrictive, non-imposing, non-bureaucratic, opened with all partners on an equal footing, with opportunities for consultation and dialogue.

The elders emphasized the expectation of coming together and working together on an equal basis to resolve issues. The Chiefs, while concurring with equity and jurisdiction, also raised the expectation that the Chief and Council's authority over their membership must be respected and nothing in a partnership should infringe on this.

7. Initiating Partnership Discussions.

Alberta Education Officials

According to Stan the First Nations should initiate any discussion. He is of the opinion that Alberta Education has a number of resources and that they can learn from First Nation as well but, "the First Nation has to initiate discussions with Alberta Education."

Ann's response was similar, and the reason she gave for First Nations initiating any discussion was because of ownership. She stated: "as long as First Nations started discussions they could and would take ownership of any partnership agreements." Ann is also of the opinion that "there are First Nation people who are well educated and who could put such partnership initiatives together."

Superintendents/Directors of Education

The Superintendents/Directors of Education are of the opinion that any approach to an agreement would have to come from the First Nations, "otherwise it could be viewed as interference in their jurisdiction." Whether it is interference or not is irrelevant and whether the provincial authorities have the best interest of the students in mind or not, is irrelevant in Steven's opinion. What has to be understood is that "if the initiative comes from the province it is seen as interference in a First Nation jurisdiction."

There is one thing, however, that the province can do according to Steven, and that is provide information as to what is available and what they are prepared to do and make their presence known. The province should according to Steven "provide information, be a presence but do not push it." With such an approach, Steven believes that First Nations will be open to discussions. Simon speaks of having to obtain or get permission prior to initiating any discussion, and he says, "this permission has to come from the elders." His reasoning for this is because "the elders will question why we are dealing with the province when our treaties are with the federal government." There has to be a certainty says Simon "that there is a comfort level in joining hands."

Teachers/Principals

This category of participant did not all agree as to who should initiate partnership discussion.

Trish felt that any initiation is a First Nation's prerogative, and that when the First Nation had settled on a model that they felt would work, then they would contact their provincial of federal counterparts. Her reasoning for this is because

"the First Nations are the ones that would be looking to change their system and how they operate, and that when the First Nation has decided on a model that they wish to institute, they would then initiate partnerships."

Thomas was also of this opinion. His view is that since governments are "charged with the responsibility of looking out for their people, self-governments when dealing with education, must initiate what they feel is for their children."

Tammy would like to see the First Nations take the initiative to form partnerships, and like Ann, she is of the opinion that there are well-educated Native people who could do this. She stated that discussion should not come solely from the federal government because "anything from them is looked at in a different light." As an extension to this, she also has the view that if discussion came from the province "it would be impeded by the federal/provincial boundary issues that First Nations schools need to come to terms with."

Tammy also expressed a view that even though the province should not initiate partnership discussions they could take an initiative, as a beginning process for the formation of partnerships, "by meeting with the First Nation leaders as a first step in an effort to break down existing barriers."

Theresa held a different view than her colleagues. She is of the opinion that since the province has the resources and the expertise the First Nations require, they should initiate partnership discussions.

Elders

Ernest held a view that the federal government still has an influence on what individual First Nations do and in discussing this question he also questions the resolve of the province, their support and commitment. He felt that he could not answer the question of initiation of partnerships because of the hold of the federal government.

> It is not for us to answer that, as Indians. We can ask for it. It is always the top guy who decides. He is over there, the father in Ottawa. The Federal Government thinks like that. We can talk about it. We can get them to try it out, sure, but how far are you going to go with it? Is he going to listen to us? Often they still hold us by the neck.

Chiefs

Chief Charles would prefer to see a joint initiation because he is very open to a partnership agreement. "We have the dollars through the federal government and the province has the expertise that we are interested in," said Chief Charles. "Both have got realize the potential, both are important and both have to come together."

Chief Cameron places the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of his First Nation and believes that "for the most part it has to be the First Nations and to date they have not taken any initiative." He does believe however that his Nation is at a "stage where they are ready to talk and they should initiate discussions with the province." He says they are ready because "the Council and some of the elders are comfortable with meeting the province and joining hands in certain areas."

In summary, the majority of the respondents felt that any discussion of a partnership or any initiation of a partnership should come from First Nations. The reasons cited for this reflected a view that for years too much has been imposed on First Nations. In addition it was believed that there would be more ownership to a partnership if it were initiated by a First Nation. The most obvious reason is that the First Nations are best able to determine what they require educationally.

Summary

It is apparent that there are a number of common themes that have arisen through an examination of these research findings. These themes provide common threads throughout the research, and can be considered as significant data. The following is a list of those common threads that arose from the Research Findings analysis.

1. There is a desire, and an agreement, among First Nations involved in this research to involve provincial education authorities and other provincial educational agencies in prospective partnerships, and in varying roles.

2. It is evident that First Nations do not wish to have the policies, rules, regulations, and legislation of provincial or federal authorities systematically imposed. There is, with this, an understanding that all prospective partnerships should be created from a position of equal standing.
3. There is an underlying mistrust, and a cautious feeling that has to be taken into consideration, that any agreed upon and established partnership with the province, could result in the weakening or the lessening of previously established treaty rights. At the very least, it has to be understood that a partnership could result in one level of government attempting to "download" responsibilities on another.
4. The Federal Government of Canada should continue to be involved with First Nations' education, however, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada must continue to devolve itself of control and involvement and become responsible for their fiduciary commitments only.
5. It must be understood that partnerships with First Nations must grow from common ground and interest, and that the province and its educational authorities and agencies must demonstrate that they are open to First Nations' ideas and methods of providing services.
6. Educational authorities and agencies must, through contact, demonstrate a willingness to provide services and enter into equal partnerships with First Nations.
7. These same authorities and agencies must demonstrate that they are open and receptive to First Nation cultural viewpoints and practices.
8. Existing legislation, as it relates to procedures and policy, may have to be examined and, if necessary changed.
9. Partners have to respect each other's jurisdiction.
10. Individual agreements must be reached rather than attempting to impose a general agreement on all First Nations.
11. In all partnerships, First Nations have to have equal status.

12. All decisions affecting First Nations, their membership and community must meet with the approval of the First Nation, and
13. Sharing and trust are two essential elements to successful partnerships.

The following chapter, Chapter 9, will focus on the elements of a partnership. The elements of partnerships era drawn from the participants' responses and reflect those reemerging ideas, expectations and visions that the participants had for partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities. These elements will assist in providing a guide for essential components in establishing viable educational partnerships.

CHAPTER 9

ELEMENTS OF A PARTNERSHIP

> The creator gave each person a special talent, and if they are in touch with their spirit and know their special work on this earth they will flourish. If people can keep doing what they are supposed to be doing, they can keep on living. People are supposed to support people so they can do what they are supposed to do—to carry out their identity (Abbie Burnstick, Paul Band, Cree Nation).

The elements of a partnership are those concepts, thoughts or abstractions that the participants of this study, through their responses in the interviews, felt were essential components for a viable, working partnership between First Nations and provincial education authorities. During the interviews, participants' expectations and visions of a partnership were identified. These are the elements of a partnership that the participants felt a passion for, and believed essential.

There were major criteria used in determining which elements should be selected. The elements selected emerged repeatedly, as essential components of any successful partnership. The second reason for selecting these elements, and more importantly, was that these were the elements most emphatically spoken of as essential to First Nations involvement. Without these elements a true partnership cannot exist. The third reason is that these may best address, though I am under no illusions that they will entirely address, some of the past and present oppressive elements of agreement that have caused concern to First Nation membership.

The elements presented in this chapter are not arranged in any particular order and do not reflect any distinctive hierarchy of importance. It is left to the reader to determine the relevance of each element for his or her particular context.

Treaty Rights

Nothing in a partnership should open the doors to removing, or jeopardize in any way, the rights and responsibilities secured in the original Treaties. The elders were very specific in their discussion on the rights and responsibilities that were secured in the treaties. As pointed out, the treaties' commitments are lifelong; as long as the sun rises, the grass grows, and the rivers flow. This should dispel any thoughts of eroding or weakening the treaties and there can be no jeopardizing of the rights as long as the treaties are not altered. However, as was pointed out by the Royal Commission, there are a number of misunderstandings related to the treaties that manifested themselves over the years. These misunderstandings arose, according to the Commission (1996a), "because of differing cultural traditions" (p. 128). It is because of these differing cultural values, and the years of a relationship that were, as described by the Commission (1996a) "characterized by disparity in power, violation of trust, and lingering unresolved disputes" (p. 7), that it becomes imperative that treaty rights be secured and free of any intentional or unintentional misinterpretation. In conversation with the Chiefs who participated in this study, partnerships should contain a clause, reaffirming Aboriginal and Treaty rights guaranteed by Section 35, of the *Constitution Act* (1982). The Royal Commission (1996b) supports such stipulations in an agreement, and suggests addressing these stipulations as protocol agreements that "state specifically that it is not a treaty but simply an intergovernmental agreement of a lesser nature that governs and, for certain purposes, defines rights and obligations derived from a treaty" (p. 81).

Downloading of Responsibilities

Nothing in a partnership agreement should facilitate "downloading" of responsibilities from one responsible party to another. This is related to the first element of a partnership, however it is not so much concerned with the loss of treaty rights as it is with the transfer of responsibility from one government to another. All participants were concerned in one fashion or another with the possibility of "downloading." This concern, according to the participants, is

based on real or near-real experiences, such as the position advocated in the Federal *White Paper,* which according to the Commission (1996a), attempted to "end the collective rights of the Aboriginal people in favor of individual rights. Included were plans to eliminate the protection for reserve lands, to terminate the status of Indian peoples, and to have services delivered to them by provincial governments" (p. 202). According to the participants this "downloading" aspect remains a concern for all First Nations. In order to circumvent the intentional or unintentional "downloading" of responsibilities, the roles of each of the partners should be clearly defined, stipulated, known to and agreed to by all partners. As noted by Chief Charles, I think there has to be a clear understanding of the role of each party when there is a Chief and Council, at a First Nation level, and an education provider that could be provincial. Each party has to understand their role and there would not be a fear of eroding federal authority. The federal government always wants to get out, but the Chief and Council has certain powers and nothing will be eroded if each party understands what role they are going to play.

First Nations' Veto

First Nations should have a veto on any aspect of an agreement that directly affects their community or its members. The First Nation members are insistent that in any partnership their members must approve of all matters that directly affect their own communities. As a result it should be noted, and understood in the initial stages of a partnership, that a veto on these types of decisions is imperative. The concept of a veto may be a difficult obstacle to overcome in a partnership, however, if we accept the principle of respect in an agreement, and if there is an appreciation of the history of bureaucratic imposition on First Nations, described by the Royal Commission (1996a), as the "raw intrusiveness of the instruments of policy used by the state in Aboriginal matters. . . the unimpeded exercise of bureaucratic authority [and] bureaucratic decisions by officials who exercised complete authority over the minutiae of their daily lives over the decades," (pp. 249-250) then the concept of a veto, only over

matters directly affecting First Nations' communities and members, is understandable. First Nation members of a partnership cannot again place themselves in a position where a majority vote by others would impose a decision on their members, and awareness and an understanding on the part of all partners of why this has to be, will ultimately remove any obstacle that the concept of a veto might place on partnership members.

The Royal Commission (1996f) concurs with the necessity for understanding and in recommendation 5.4.1 (b) recommends that "public education should involve both the sharing of information and a process of interaction, leading in time to a shared sense of advocacy and of public support" (p. 94).

Access to Information

Knowledge and information, and access and control of this knowledge and information, as noted by Morgan (1986), is a source of power, as it gives a person or a group the ability to direct, control, analyze, summarize, shape, and filter information to advance their own end (p. 167). In addition to this, Morgan also noted that access and control of information could be used to develop a sense of importance and enhance a person's or group's "indispensability and expert status" (p. 169).

Throughout the interview process equal and equitable access to information was a factor mentioned by most of those spoken to. There were a number of apparent reasons for this insistence. 1) The primary benefit of a partnership, for First Nations, would be access to information. Many First Nations operate independently and do not have the personnel and resources necessary to access pertinent information. 2) Because of the isolation caused, in some cases by their geographic locations and in others by their independent status, many First Nations often find themselves in a position of having to search intensely for information which is already available in other sectors of society. 3) As many First Nations declare self-government, and federal agencies devolve themselves of their responsibilities, the tasks of assuming control, while

simultaneously establishing necessary infrastructures, often becomes insurmountable. 4) Many provincial agencies, and especially those related to education, have developed expertise that may be of assistance to First Nations as they begin addressing their own educational concerns, and 5) many First Nations are in the process of trying to right the many years of imposition and there often appears to be a sense of urgency to get on with business. Having access to relevant, accurate information, can greatly assist this endeavor.

Equal Say

There cannot be anything within the agreement that would place any one partner in a position subservient to another. Too often in past agreements First Nations, because of legislation or lack of experience, have been placed in positions where they play a subservient role.

The majority of the participants, when discussing their expectations of a partnership, were emphatic about ensuring equality in a partnership. How then can respect and equality be addressed and ensured in a partnership? The Royal Commission (1996b), when discussing the fiduciary relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples, called for the Crown to "restore its relationship with treaty nations to a true partnership" (p. 43). This restoration of a relationship and the development of a true partnership will require, according to the Commission "the mutual agreement of the treaty parties to share a territory and its benefits and thereby establish a continuing and irrevocable relationship of coexistence" (p. 42). An extension of these principals to any agreement would build a partnership that ensures equal and equitable status.

Treaties As A Basis

The French and British Crowns originally committed themselves to a relationship of peaceful coexistence and non-interference with the Aboriginal Nations. Treaties were established originally on a nation-to-nation basis. According to the Royal Commission (1996b), "the French and British Crowns recognized the Aboriginal nations as self-governing entities with their own system of laws and governance and agreed to respect them as such" (p. 2).

This relationship continued for centuries and is still the preferred method of establishing effective partnerships for First Nations. The concept of "nation-to-nation" is recognized by all First Nations and the Government of Canada and an extension of the original treaty concept should be recognized as a basic premise in establishing a partnership.

Applicability

An agreement should be applicable to individual First Nations, and there should be no expectation that one partnership agreement is universal and acceptable to all First Nations.

There are a multitude of First Nations and they tend to be small. There is also a lack of commonality between them. They view their autonomy and their rights very strongly. It should not be expected to get a national perspective because of the fact that First Nations are distinct Nations.

Recognizing the autonomy and individuality of First Nations is an extension of the nation-to-nation concept. An example of the extension of this concept is present in the 1996 *Sub-agreement on Education between Treaty 8 First Nations and the Queen in the Right of Canada*. In this Sub-agreement clause 5, states,

> Implementation of the framework agreement will take place at the First Nations' level, individually or collectively, at their initiative and agreement. It is anticipated that further discussion will be required with individual First Nations within the framework agreement to be established.

As noted in this clause, even within a particular treaty organization, one nation is not prepared to place itself in a position of imposing on another nation or its communities. This, as we have seen, is essential to the nature of treaties and, this concept should extend to all agreements, as it is insisted upon by First Nations when entering into agreements and partnerships.

Legislation

The Province may need to change legislation that may be deemed prohibitive to the establishment of partnerships.

A review of the *School Act* and regulations in Chapter 5 Legislation, demonstrated that legislation is in place to allow for partnerships. However, there are instances where some of the existing legislation may not go far enough or is prohibitive to partnership development. An example of this can be found in Section 46 of the *School Act.* While allowing for First Nation representation on a provincial School Board of Trustees, Section 46 does not require the provincial body to allow representation, rather it requires the agreement of both the school board and the First Nation. In reality such legislation puts a First Nation, and their decision to become involved, in the hands of the provincially elected board and thus places the First Nation in a subservient position. In addition the legislation also does not provide for proportionate representation irrespective of the number of treaty students attending a particular jurisdiction. While it is noted that this legislation is important because it allows for participation of First Nation communities on provincial boards and it recognizes the responsibility of Indian parents for their children's education it should also be noted that it is contrary to the elements of an effective partnership as described by participants of this study. Further to this, such legislation does not recognize the "nation-to-nation" concept suggested by the Royal Commission as essential to partnership development. In order to establish effective partnerships the various levels of government should examine all legislation that may prohibit partnerships with the intent of allowing for involvement. Andy noted, the position of government should be made very clear, so various departments can deal directly with First Nations.

Power

No one person or group in a partnership should have the power to impose its will over others.

Alberta Education, according to the officials who participated in the study, is of the opinion that the province wishes a collaborative approach when working with First Nations, an approach of working together where no one person is in a position of power over another. The locus of power is not with the bureaucrats

nor is it with the First Nation. It is shared. An acceptance of this concept will in reality equalize, many of the sources of power as defined by Morgan (1986). A collaborative approach, and an acceptance of a common shared approach to a partnership, removes many of the obstacles that presently prevent the formation of effective partnerships with First Nations. Internally, a shared partnership agreement will not have to concern itself with the sources of power and the lobbying and positioning that traditionally accompanies a traditional partnership. Rather energies can be centered on the defined tasks of a particular partnership. In order to ensure that an approach is shared the concepts of understanding, respect and nation-to-nation have to be embraced.

Community Based

A partnership should not be "top heavy" and bureaucratic, rather it has to have in place a mechanism to ensure "grass roots" input.

This element is related to the previous element in that it again refers to the First Nations' discomfort with a bureaucratic structure. Throughout the interview process the insistence on community input and involvement was apparent. This involvement is an extension of the individualistic and autonomous nature of First Nations. It is also reflective of a culture that traditionally reaches agreement through consensus and, as noted by Stevenson, Johnson, and Greschner (1993), "a culture where power is individual and equated with the right to have control of your life and future, as an individual and as a community" (p. 164). Elizabeth, when speaking of her expectations of a partnership, felt that not being "top heavy" and listening to the "grass roots" were essential components. Sidney agreed with Elizabeth. He is of the opinion that the success of a partnership will depend on the ability of the partners to actually come to the community, to be involved with the community, and to relate to the community. He also stated that attempts to minimize the number involved will result in the community gradually breaking away or distancing itself from the initiative.

Non-Legal and Non-Binding

It is understood that partnerships are non-legal entities that are not binding and can be dissolved at any point.

This element reflects many of the concerns raised in relation to loss of treaty rights, the possibility of "downloading" and the necessity of First Nations' leadership ensuring that they do not place themselves in a position where they may not have of control decisions related to their membership. If partnerships are legally binding, First Nations may become part of something maybe we do not want to be part of. The Royal Commission (1996b) also addresses this element when discussing treaty processes. The Commission recommends to treaty parties that they "they put their agreements in writing and that they include in them dispute resolution mechanisms that can be invoked by either or both treaty parties" (p. 81). An extension of this recommendation to accommodate partnership understandings, could assist in resolving future disputes.

Resources

Adequate resources, both financial and human, should be guaranteed and in place to ensure the success of the partnership initiative.

According to Hylton (1994) one of the substantial barriers to self-government initiatives relates to the fact that many communities, because of a century of colonialism, are "ill equipped to forge ahead quickly with any new arrangements that would place an increased burden of responsibility on already overtaxed community leaders" (p. 246). The Royal Commission (1996e) recognized this as well when they stated that not all recommendations can be implemented as "governments do not have the financial resources and Aboriginal nations do not have the human resources to absorb and manage simultaneous change on all fronts" (p. 20). However the Commission does believe that decisive intervention can reap benefits (p. 21). The success of a particular partnership agreement may rest not only on the recognition of this fact but also on the willingness of the partnership membership to address this need.

Flexible Partnerships

The Provincial Government should, through memoranda of agreement and understandings, demonstrate a willingness to enter in flexible partnerships.

The review of the legislation impacting partnerships in Chapter 5 demonstrated that there is presently provincial legislation allowing for the establishment of effective partnerships. The difficulty however is that many government agencies may not be aware of these agreements or at the very least may be uncertain of the role they have in extending agreements. The position of the provincial government has to be made very clear so that personnel in various government departments can deal directly with the First Nations. This was the intention with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the provincial government and Treaty 8 Chiefs. This is obviously a reference to the frustration felt by many, because the position of the province is not understood by many of the officials who work with these same agreements. There is a need for the province to take a pro-active approach and offer to First Nations not just a defined role for their officials but also an indication of the parameters they have set for agreements with First Nations. Such an approach could greatly assist in opening doors to partnerships with First Nations by a government that traditionally has had few ties with First Nations because of federal responsibilities.

First Nations' Role

First Nations should play a key role in any and all partnerships. In an effort to overcome the years of subjugation and mistrust which has developed, it is necessary that First Nations play a key role in any and all partnerships. As was noted when discussing the abuse of power in Chapter 2 there are two aspects related to this element that justify its importance and need. The first aspect relates to what the Royal Commission (1996a) referred to as the "raw intrusiveness of the instruments of policy," and the second relates to the fact that Aboriginal people consider the political institutions, and the power and authority of these institutions, to be illegitimate. Many things have been implemented

without any consideration to the First Nations and of their impact on the First Nations. A partnership should stipulate that it is not necessary to assume someone else's rules and regulations just because you want a partnership. In order to remove the perception that many political institutions have power and authority over Aboriginal peoples, it is essential that partnership structures be established to ensure representation and key roles for Aboriginal people.

Consultation

There has to be demonstrated consultation with First Nations. In addition to First Nations playing a key role in any partnership, the concept of consultation provides the next essential element. Consultation has to take place on three levels. The first is with the First Nation members in a partnership, the second, requires a level of consultation that ensures community understanding and support, and the third level of consultation should result in an appreciation of how First Nations' culture works and an understanding of their viewpoints and the Aboriginal way of doing things. The first two levels of consultation we have discussed. The third level, consultation with the intent of understanding another culture, is essential to the success of a partnership. Through the interview process, comments would arise that would indicate that a lack of understanding, on the part of the larger society, has often led to difficulties. I am sure that this is not a startling revelation to most readers, however, what it does indicate is that there is a problem with many people, agencies or government departments not appreciating nor understanding the Aboriginal culture or values. To address these concerns, non-Aboriginal members of a partnership will have to use whatever measures necessary to come to an understanding of the Aboriginal culture. Such measures should include cross-cultural in servicing and consultation with First Nation members. The Royal Commission (1996e) recognized the need for an understanding a suggested interactive strategies to accommodate possible change. The Commissioners expressed a view that with interactive strategies "the old relationship of paternalism and prejudice will have

been rejected and, in its place, a foundation laid for a new partnership founded on responsibility and mutual respect" (p. 21).

All Partners Present

All partnership discussions should begin with all potential partners present. There are two aspects to this element that deserve consideration. The first deals with the necessity of having all partners involved from the outset, and the second, reflects the need for the involvement of only those representatives who have the authority to commit and the power to make decisions. The extension to this is that only those who have the authority to make decisions should attend. In addition the government has to make their position clear so that various government departments can deal directly with First Nations.

Initiating Partnership Discussions

The initial steps of forming a partnership should come from the First Nation. It was generally agreed that the initial step in undertaking partnership discussions rested with the leadership of the First Nations. The rationale for this varied, but primarily ownership, and the fact that First Nations are best able to determine their need and destiny, were primary reasons given for this perspective.

Transitional

Partnerships should be considered transitional in nature and viewed as such. Two things were taken into consideration when defining this element. The first related to the level of progress. It is necessary that partnerships be between individual First Nations and the province. This is in reference to the individuality and autonomy of nations. However, there is another aspect of this individuality that should be understood and addressed, and that is as it relates to the various levels of progress of individual First Nations. We have already determined that all First Nation communities do not have the same levels of expertise and resources. What has to be considered, and understood, is that the need and the purpose of the partnership will be dependent on the level of

expertise and the availability of resources. Partnerships will, from this perspective be transitional. The transitional nature of partnerships should be realized prior to entering a partnership. If we review the benefits and the expectations of a partnership, as perceived by the participants, it becomes obvious that the primary benefit to First Nations is the access to information and to expertise. A review of the elements of a partnership would indicate that the expectations of a partnership is that accessing expertise and information should in no way be interpreted as an acceptance or adoption of the values and ways of another society. Rather, it should be understood that partnerships are a way to, and a means to, an end. This end, is full control by First Nations of all aspects of their lives. Given this premise, the transitional nature of a partnership has to be understood, appreciated and respected. This premise is reflective of the intent of the study as originally outlined in Chapter 1, Introduction.

The elements as listed in this chapter of the study, if applied to a partnership structure, would help place First Nations in a position to exercise complete power and authority over their educational systems. Legislatively and legally, as INAC continues to devolve themselves of the authority they have held over Aboriginal peoples, First Nations are assuming operation of services once provided by INAC. Control can be a reality only when someone else is no longer able to restrict the range of your choice. When you equated these partnership elements with self-determination initiatives, because of the devolution philosophy, control as individuals, as communities and as nations is possible. Consideration of the elements of a partnership will not only help reflect this, it will also ensure power in the European context, and it will help allow for the exercise of power in a way that reflects the Aboriginal concept.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> I think we are getting a faint glimmer of what the shapes of our structures are going to likely look like as we go into the next century (Participant Personal Interview).

In this chapter I provide a brief overview of the study, discuss implications for prospective partners, make recommendations for these partners and offer suggestions for further study. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides the reader with an overview of the study. Section two discusses the implications of the research findings. The final section, makes recommendations for First Nations, Provincial education authorities, and educational agencies that could potentially assist provincial authorities and agencies in the establishment of partnerships with First Nations. The recommendations arose from the data collected from the participants, and reflect only reoccurring themes or issues that participants felt would further their aspirations in establishing effective partnerships, which in their opinion, would assist First Nations education. The recommendations are categorized under headings that reflect the organization or agency to which the recommendation is directed. It should be understood that any recommendation directed toward First Nations should not be considered as applicable to all First Nations and the individuality and autonomy of First Nations is appreciated.

In addition, in this section I will also make suggestions for further study. The further study suggestions reflect areas of interest that require a more in-depth examination in order to make an informed comment or recommendation.

Overview of the Study

Significant changes have occurred and continue to occur in the area of First Nation self-government . This study, namely, First Nation/provincial education authority partnerships looks to develop a model of educational partnership between these parties. A review of the purpose of the study, the

significance of the study, and a brief discussion on the methods used will give the reader the best overview of the nature of the study and its intent.

The purpose of this study was to develop a model of educational partnership between First Nation communities, their leadership and the provincial education authorities. Through interviews with Chiefs, elders, superintendents, teachers, principals and Alberta Education personnel, perceptions respecting educational issues, needs, visions, participants and expectations of a partnerships, led to important insights and the development of elements that were considered essential to effective partnerships.

This study is of significance to First Nations because it could give First Nations' governing bodies , access to provincial educational systems and educational authorities. As First Nations assume full governance and financial control over all aspects of their communities, a model of partnership that sets some of the ground rules, visions, roles for the partners, benefits, partner expectations and also some of the criteria and conditions for partners could potentially open many avenues that presently are not accessed for varying reasons.

The significance for the province mirrors that of the First Nations. In addition to this, provincial jurisdictions may now have at their access, a list of criteria available to them, and a better understanding of the aspirations of First Nation communities to use when negotiations with these same communities.

Respondents selected for this qualitative study included Alberta Education personnel, superintendents/directors of First Nation educational systems, principals and teachers of both First Nation and provincial education authorities, Chiefs and elders. This range of participants was selected in order to ensure that as many perspectives as possible were covered when discussing partnerships. All interviews were audio taped and transcripts were prepared. The criteria for partnerships were developed based the recurring themes from participants.

Summary of Research Findings

The research findings centered on seven questions. First, what are the educational issues facing First Nations? Second, is there was a place for a provincial education authority in a partnership, and what might that role be? Third, is there room for other provincial educational agencies in a partnership agreement? Fourth, what is the role of the Federal Government, and what is the potential for the erosion of federal government responsibilities if the province were to enter into partnerships with First Nations? Fifth, what are the benefits of a partnership with provincial education authorities? Sixth, what are the visions, expectations, and criteria for a partnership between First Nations and provincial education authorities? Seventh, who should initiate partnership discussions? The discussion below is organized according to these seven questions.

1. What are the educational issues facing First Nations?

The issues affecting First Nation education, as identified by the participants, were as varied as the participants themselves. However, a number of issues of significance arose during the interviews that reoccurred throughout discussions with the participants. Curriculum development, curriculum that reflects the Aboriginal perspective and culture and language acquisition were identified as issues because they are factors contributing to the loss of the Aboriginal culture. In addition, the lack of relevant curriculum is seen as contributing to the low self-esteem often felt by many First Nation students who attend provincial schools. Related to the curriculum issue was the issue of teacher preparedness. Teacher training, the sensitivity of teachers and administrators toward Aboriginal students and their particular instructional requirements, and turnover rates and stress associated with non-Aboriginal teachers were seen as issues of significance impacting First Nations' education. Additional issues identified by the participants include efforts to secure control of education, "downloading" of secured treaty rights, cooperation with provincial counterparts, and duplication of services among individual First Nation school authorities.

2. Is there a place for a provincial education authority in a partnership, and what might that role be?

All categories of participants foresaw an involvement of a provincial education authority in a partnership, and all participants spoke of areas of involvement that they believed would improve student educational opportunities and achievement. Of these opportunities curriculum development, assessment and curriculum standards were the primary areas where involvement was viewed as a benefit. These areas were seen as being beneficial because it is viewed that the province has a level of educational expertise that is not presently available to many of the First Nation schools. Many of the participants were also of the opinion that an involvement with a provincial education authority would also assist in bringing about an understanding and an appreciation of the Aboriginal culture by the larger society.

3. Is there room for other provincial educational agencies in a partnership agreement?

The agencies discussed in particular were the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Boards' Association. There is moderate interest in involving these and other agencies in partnership agreements. However, it was generally felt by the majority of the participants that discussion with external agencies is best left in the hands of the politicians because of the political nature of many of these agencies, particularly the ATA. The ATA was seen as a partner who could provide specialists council and curriculum support for teachers and school based administrators. Teachers however expressed an interest in having full professional support and involvement in the ATA. The ASBA was seen an organization which can assist First Nations in developing a similar governance support structure and as an organization that could assist existing governance structures.

4. What is the role of the Federal Government, and what is the potential for the erosion of Federal Government responsibilities?

The Federal Government has a role and will continue to play a major role in First Nations affairs because of the Treaties. Discussions with all participant

groups would indicate that the federal government not have the same level of involvement in First Nation affairs as they have in the past. First Nations intend on including the Federal Government, to varying degrees, in any partnership agreement because of their fiduciary responsibilities only. First Nations are however cautious of partnership agreements because of past attempts by the Federal Government to "download" Treaty responsibilities.

5. What are the benefits of a partnership with provincial education authorities?

Sharing of expertise, access to curriculum, and accessibility to provincial educational resources are some of the educational benefits that all categories of participants felt could be realized with partnerships. In addition, improvement in the delivery of educational programs and not having to duplicate processes were seen as additional benefits. Throughout the interview process there were many expectations placed on the benefits of partnerships that included fostering mutual respect and understanding, reducing racism and stereotyping, community growth and most importantly partnerships were seen as a vehicle that would assist both groups, the First Nations and the province, in coming to a positive resolution regarding the education of First Nation children.

6. What are the visions, expectations and criteria for a partnership between First Nations and provincial education authorities?

The visions, expectations and criteria for partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities provided the basis for the elements of a partnership listed in Chapter 8. Participants envisioned a partnership where members had equal access to information and equitable sharing of information. Partners have to have an equal and collaborative approach to issues and one member is not placed ahead of another nor are another's values imposed. First Nations want recognition of their jurisdiction and wish to maintain many of their traditional ways of thinking. To ensure that this subjugation and imposition does not occur within newly established partnerships First Nations wish a veto over decisions directly affecting their membership. In addition to these visions/expectations/criteria it also has to be understood that decisions reached in partnerships are not applicable to all First Nations.

7. Who should initiate will partnership discussions?

It was the general feeling of the participants that First Nations should initiate discussions of partnership with any government or provincial agency. This is based on the belief that there will be more of a sense of ownership if a partnership is initiated by a First Nation. There is also the assumption that provincially initiated partnerships may be interpreted as an imposition. What is understood is that First Nations should initiate partnerships with provincial authorities and agencies that demonstrate an ability to work with First Nations and with departments who have been given the authority to make decisions. There were a few exceptions to this general line of thought and it came from the chiefs. The Chiefs made mention of how First Nations may wish the province to initiate discussion. This is because of the fact that the province is in the position of power because they have possession of the information and expertise that the First Nation wishes access. What is of importance in these situations is how you approach First Nations.

This research would indicate that some of the First Nations in the province of Alberta not only see a need for but also desire partnerships with the provincial education authority, and to a varying degree other educational agencies. However there has to, on the part of the established agencies, a willingness to rethink the criteria of entrenched partnerships.

Implications

The implications of this study are related to the findings in Chapter 8, Elements of a partnership. Throughout the study there appeared to be two central areas or themes that required an examination by all parties who are presently involved with First Nations, who intend to work with, or establish some form of relationship with First Nation individuals or organizations, and these are the areas of understanding and accepting. Whether it was through the Literature Review, Chapter 2, or through discussions with the participants, these two areas, for lack of a better word, continually arose as central to the formation of any

partnership. It is these areas of understanding and acceptance that are also central to the implications of this study.

If it is the wish to have effective partnerships with First Nations there are criteria necessary that the non-Aboriginal partners will have to understand and accept that are not part of the currently entrenched partnership that the larger society has developed and accepted as the norm. In order for this to happen, established mindsets will have to be changed and reevaluated, with an emphasis being placed on appreciating and understanding the First Nation perspective. A partnership with First Nations will require the established contractual, legal agreements to be in place of course, however, in addition, the following criteria will have to be accepted. First, the Treaty rights guaranteed to First Nations will have to be protected and secured and nothing in a partnership relationship should provide an opportunity for the removal or the jeopardizing of these secured rights. Second, no partnership agreement should facilitate the intentional or unintentional "downloading" of responsibilities. Third, it has to be understood that First Nations have to secure a veto over any aspect or any decision that will directly affect a First Nation community. As an extension to the concept of a veto, partnerships are to be understood as non-legal entities, which can be dissolved at any point. Fourth, communication and the sharing of information and access to information is key to establishing partnerships. A lack of information or the denying of access to information will place one of the partners in a subservient position thus jeopardizing the partnership. Fifth, The original intent of the treaties, a nation-to-nation agreement, should be the basis of partnerships. This would ensure an equal say by all sides and ensure that one partner is not placed in a subservient position. In addition to this, such a structure will ensure that one partner is not placed in a position of having to accept the will of another. Six established political partners should be open to changing regulations or legislation that may be prohibitive to effective partners based on the elements earlier described. Such change or removal of regulations and legislation will also ensure that partnerships do not become extensions of the established bureaucracy rather than focusing on the "grass roots" for

direction, need and solutions. Seven, First Nations will have to play a key role in any agreement and it will have to be demonstrated that a process of consultation particularly with First Nation communities is readily accessible. Eight, the initial move to form a partnership should come from the First Nation. In addition to this, when discussions begin all potential partners should be present and represented by individuals who have the authority to make decisions. Nine, all partnership have to viewed as transitional in nature, and finally, ten, it has to be understood that any decisions or agreements reached are applicable only to a particular First Nation and cannot be considered as universal.

The insistence of these elements, by First Nations, as essential elements to effective partnerships is a result of the years of subjugation and imposition that First Nation communities had to endure for centuries. It is also my opinion that the acceptance of these elements by non-Aboriginal partners will help establish levels of trust and understanding necessary for effective partnerships. In short, it is a partnership that appreciates the First Nation perspective and accepted ways of operating.

Conclusions

At the outset of this study it was my intent to review the relevant literature related to governance structure legislation, and to recommend after discussion with interest groups, changes to legislation that would enable workable partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities. It became evident however that there existed agreements and sub-agreements between the Province of Alberta and First Nations that would enable such partnerships. What was lacking was either the will to establish working partnerships or the understanding of what elements were necessary to enable partnerships, or both. This realization caused a shift in the intent of this study and a slight change in its focus. This study's primary focus moved from an examination of governance legislation and became an examination of and a checklist of what elements are necessary if effective partnerships were to be

established. This study arrived at certain conclusions based on its changed focus that warrant examination.

First, there is a desire on the parts of First Nations and the province to establish effective educational partnerships.

Second, all participant groups saw definite educational benefits to both the First Nations and the province in two particular areas. The first was in the area of a sharing of educational expertise and not duplicating processes and resources. The second related to the identification and positive resolution regarding the education of First Nation children.

Third, all participants were of the opinion that the federal government, in spite of their devolution policies, should continue being involved in any partnership agreements however their involvement should be fiduciary only.

Fourth, a shift is necessary in how we view partnerships and the entrenched criteria of partnerships require rethinking in order to accommodate traditional Aboriginal values and ways of thinking.

Fifth, there are services provided by educational agencies that would benefit First Nation education and these same agencies should, through their actions, demonstrate a willingness to accommodate certain aspects of their services to reflect identified needs of First Nation educational organizations.

Sixth, all partnership agreements should reflect the intent of the original treaties, a relationship based on a mechanism committed to a nation to nation, non-interference, non-subordinate, mutually respectful, equal partnership.

Seventh, effective partnerships require an understanding of the Aboriginal culture, its values and an appreciation of Aboriginal partner's perspective. Effective, affective and viable partnerships that reflect the values and the intent of the original Treaties should be the end product of any discussion regarding cooperative relationships.

Eighth, some participants felt that present legislation inhibited partnership development rather than encouraging it.

Recommendations

The conclusions drawn from this research and the elements identified as necessary for effective partnerships led to recommendations for potential participants in partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities. These recommendations are categorized under headings that reflect the organization or agency that the recommendation is directed.

General

Based on the sixth conclusion, the all partnership agreements should reflect the intent of the original treaties, it is recommended that:

1. The definition of partnership used by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples be the basis of any partnership. Such a definition will ensure that First Nations' jurisdiction is not lost nor compromised.

Rationale:

This definition encompasses the intent of the original treaties and recognizes the Nation status of First Nations.

Alberta Government

Existing legislation does not always promote or encourage partnerships. As noted in conclusion 8 there is legislation that prohibits partnerships that reflect the elements identified as necessary for effective partnerships. Therefore it is recommended that:

1. The provincial legislature should revisit Section 46 of the *School Act* with the intent of giving First Nations assured accessibility to positions on provincial school boards.

Rationale:

Section 46 of the *School Act* was designed with the intent of involving First Nations in the education of their children. It was also designed to be a vehicle to allow on-reserve First Nation members the ability to sit on a provincial governance body. The one flaw that this legislation has, from a First Nation's perspective, is that the appointment, under this section of the Act, to a provincial

school board, is still a voluntary decision of the elected provincial school board. There are cases where provincial school boards have decided not to exercise this section of the *School Act* even though there are a significant number of on-reserve children attending provincial schools under that board's jurisdiction.

Conclusions 1, 2, 4, and 5 relate to the desire of both the First Nations and the province in entering into a partnership because educational benefits were envisioned. They also relate to how shifts are necessary in how we view relationships and how there must also be a willingness to accommodate. In order to accommodate shifts and rethinking, the following recommendations are made to the Alberta Government:

2. The Alberta Government should define the role for Alberta Education by setting the parameters of their authority, with respect to on and off reserve First Nation students. This would give Alberta Education and provincial school jurisdictions the freedom and authority to negotiate and work with First Nations.

Rationale:

Throughout the interview process, the concern of who is responsible for what and who has the authority and mandate to explore partnerships and contracts with First Nations was expressed. It would appear, that if a direction was established for the province and roles of various departments were identified, then these barriers of uncertainty would be removed.

3. The province of Alberta commit more resources, financial and human, to curriculum development initiatives, particularly as they relate to the development of Native Language support materials and cultural studies.

Rationale:

The Native Education Project of Alberta Education has committed minimal financial resources for the development of First Nation core language materials. As this initiative nears completion, Alberta Education should direct their financial resources to the development of language support materials. This would not only lend additional credibility to Alberta Education, but in addition, such commitment would continue to enhance the importance of Aboriginal languages.

4. The Alberta Government should review the original mandate of the Native Education project with the intent of increasing their presence, and possibly forming a separate branch, thereby giving it the presence it deserves.

Rationale:

Native education issues have been addressed by the Alberta Government and Alberta Education through the Native Education Project since its inception in 1985. Originally the Project was designed to enhance and to make equal educational opportunities for First Nation students through involvement. The project has not evaluated nor reviewed its mandate with First Nation stakeholders and as a result cannot guarantee that the direction of the project is current or that it reflects the prevailing thought or wishes of First Nations.

Alberta Learning

Alberta Learning also has a significant role to play in partnership development, especially as it relate to the identification and resolution of issues related to the education of First Nation children. In addition, they can also play a supportive role in assisting with partnership development, facilitate the necessary shifts of how partnerships are reviewed, and promote the cultural understanding and accommodation required. In order to realize this, it is recommended that Alberta Learning

1. Initiate an affirmative action program directly related to the hiring of more First Nations personnel.

Rationale:

A part of the original mandate of the Native Education Project was a commitment by the Alberta Government and Alberta Education for the development and delivery of educational programs and services to First Nation children. Such a mandate can only be accomplished if all departments of Alberta Education have personnel who can both influence and interpret all Alberta Education initiatives with a First Nation perspective.

2. Begin to work on protocols for a coordinated approach in dealing with First Nations.

Rationale:

It became apparent in interviewing Alberta Learning participants that there was an uncertainty as to what the parameters were when negotiating with First Nations. This uncertainty has potential for loss of cooperative partnerships and can potentially create divisions between First Nations and Alberta Learning as uncertainty could be interpreted as disinterest. In addition to this, Alberta Learning could also be bypassed by First Nations, when it comes to potential negotiations, as First Nations will not negotiate with an organization if that organization does not have full authority to negotiate.

3. Examine alternate methods of achievement testing more sensitive to the First Nations' culture, language and learning styles.

Rationale:

As noted by some participants, achievement testing does not accurately reflect traditional knowledge and learning styles. Alberta Learning does have the expertise to work in partnership with First Nations to develop testing formats that more accurately reflect achievement levels among First Nation children.

First Nations

The following recommendations for First Nations and Other Agencies/Organizations are related to conclusions 2, 5 and 7. There are agencies and organizations that possess areas of expertise and services that First Nations wish to access. It is incumbent on the First Nations to access these services, and, as we saw in Chapter 8, *Research Findings*, it is recommended that First Nations initiate partnership discussions. In addition to this, the following recommendations would assist in promoting the Aboriginal culture and its values. Considering access to services and expertise, and the understanding of the Aboriginal culture that such access would promote, it is recommended that:

1. Individual First Nations, and First Nation organizations, should approach universities in the province of Alberta in an effort to petition these

institutions to have, as a requirement for convocation with a Bachelor of Education degree, courses in cross cultural and Native awareness.

Rationale:

At some point in their career all teachers in Alberta will have had First Nation children in their classrooms. In order to promote and enhance the educational experience for the First Nation child, all teachers in this province should have an understanding, appreciation and a working knowledge of the First Nation culture.

2. First Nation communities should explore the possibility of forming a Board of Trustees parallel to a provincial Board of Trustees with representatives determined by appointment per school. This Board should center its mandate and energies on educational issues rather than traditional school board business.

Rationale:

The establishment of a parallel organization to the Alberta School Boards Association opens a number of potential options and possibilities. Structurally it would allow for the formation of regional Boards that could center their energies on educational issues rather than the traditional school board business, thereby protecting local autonomy. It would also provide access to expertise already available to their provincial counterparts, if so desired.

3. First Nations organizations involved in the original signing of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Province of Alberta, should approach the province and negotiate education sub-agreements.

Rationale:

Memoranda of Agreements between the province and First Nation leadership have opened the door to partnership negotiations. The next step in ensuring the partnerships voiced by the participants is to negotiate specific sub-agreements specific to education and educational endeavors.

Other Agencies and Organizations

1. Post secondary institutions in Alberta should explore a partnership agreement with First Nations for the formation of an acceptable concept of a teacher education program specifically designed to meet the needs of First Nation teachers.

Rationale:

A need was identified by participants for a teacher-training program that was specifically geared toward training of First Nations teachers. This recommendation is also related to the issue identified by participants for teachers that can relate to First Nations students their culture and language.

2. The Alberta Teachers' Association should develop sub-agreements with First Nations that would demonstrate a willingness to work within the parameters set by First Nations respective to professional services and secondments.

Rationale:

Memoranda of Agreement and Understanding are in place that will allow for partnerships. The Alberta Teachers' Association could demonstrate their willingness to become involved with First Nations education by drafting sub-agreements in areas of interest to First Nation educators and administrators. Such areas could include professional services, curriculum initiatives, specialists' councils, and professional development.

3. The Alberta School Boards Association should explore the unique needs of First Nation educational systems and begin the process of opening discussions on a parallel organization to the Alberta School Boards Association dedicated to First Nations education.

Rationale:

Related to No. 2, First Nations, this recommendation asks the provincial body to recognize the unique educational needs of First Nation children and, simultaneously, places a responsibility on the provincial organization to address these needs. The door to support and partnership would also be open if both groups saw a need, and benefit, for the establishment of parallel organizations.

Future Study

Conclusion 3 reflected the view that all participants were of the opinion that the federal government should be involved in any partnership agreement. However, it was understood that their involvement should be limited to honoring financial obligations. Given this view it is recommended that:

1. A review of Federal funding to Band Controlled schools over the last five years. The intent of this would be to determine if Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has decreased funding for education or whether it is keeping current with inflation and real costs. In addition, it should be determined if, with their devolution of administrative functions, if there is corresponding dollar transfers.

Rationale:

There is a concern expressed among participants that the Federal Government of Canada has attempted, and will continue to attempt, to shift or download responsibilities to other levels of government if the opportunity presents itself. A study of funding levels and devolution policies and practices will help determine if this concern is warranted.

Conclusion 8 spoke of legislation that prohibited partnerships. Related to this is the fact that there exist agreements and sub- agreements particularly between the province and some First Nations that would enhance partnership development if they were known and further developed. To help elevate this situation it is recommended that a future study

2. Examine Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Agreement that presently exist between First Nations and provincial governments.

Rationale:

There presently exists within the province of Alberta, memoranda that First Nations have expressed a concern about where they are at this point in time. An examination could potentially accomplish two things. First, it could make original signatories and agencies of the government aware of the intent of the memoranda, and secondly, it could open the doors to negotiations of sub-agreements. In addition to this there are a number of jurisdictions that have

tuition, and other specific agreements, with individual First Nations. An examination of these agreements could assist public school systems in their negotiations with First Nations.

Many of the conclusions addressed understanding and appreciation of the Aboriginal culture and its values. It was also evident from Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, that there are significant differences in the mainstream and Aboriginal concept of power. It is recommended that:

3. A further review of the Aboriginal concepts of power be explored. Rationale: A fuller understanding of the Aboriginal concepts of power would, in my opinion, assist with the formation of effective partnerships and help in developing an understanding and appreciation of First Nations.

Purpose Revisited

The purpose of this study was to develop a model of an educational partnership between First Nations and provincial educational authorities. Based on an assumption that if partnerships were desired and presently not existing, or if existing and not effective, it was asked "what is necessary for an effective partnership that would assist First Nations in assuming full control of their educational services while ensuring success, and also provide a benefit to a provincial education authority?" Has this been accomplished?

Initially it was believed, that in order to have effective partnerships between First Nations and provincial education authorities, a governance model outlining structures and recommending legislative changes would be necessary. However, after examining legislation it was determined that agreements and co-agreements that promoted and enabled partnerships were already permitted under existing statutes. This thesis then turned its attention to developing a model that consists of a checklist of characteristics necessary for effective partnerships. Elements of a Partnership are provided in Chapter 9.

It is known that because of new financial arrangements with the federal government, the devolution policies of the federal government and the First Nations move toward self-government, many First Nations are requesting

services from the province that previously had been the responsibility of INAC. This study has addressed this issue. The criteria or elements necessary to develop effective partnerships with First Nations and provincial education authorities, are designed not to negatively impact previously secured treaty rights. They are also designed to respect the autonomy of First Nations, their culture or government, while simultaneously supporting self-government initiatives. In addition, it is my opinion that if partners follow these elements and adopt the presented understandings of a partnership, they will develop an understanding and appreciation of the realities that are presently impacting First Nations' education and be able to assist these same First Nations attain their desired educational goals.

REFERENCES

Abbott, M. G. & Caracheo, F. (1988). Power, authority, and bureaucracy. In N.J. Boyan. (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration.* (pp. 239-257). New York: Longman.

Alfred, Taiaiake. (1999). *Peace power and righteousness: An indigenous manifesto.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Asch, M. (1993). *Home and native land: Aboriginal rights and the canadian constitution.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Battiste, M. A. & Barman, J. (1995). *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Boldt, M. (1993). *Surviving as Indians: The challenge of self-government.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Booth, W. C., Colombe, G., Williams, J. M. (1995) *The craft of research.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Boyan, N. J. (1988). Describing and explaining administrator behavior. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration.* (pp. 77-97). New York: Longman.

Brobeck, S. (1990). The need for better ethical guidelines for conducting and reporting research. *Journal of curriculum and supervision, Vol. 5, No. 2,* 194-200.

Burgess, R. G. (1989). *The ethics of educational research.* Philadelphia, PA: The Falmer Press.

Burns, James MacGregor. (1978) *Leadership.* New York: Harper and Row.

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (1996). *CAUT response to tri-council code of conduct for research involving humans.* (http://www/caut.ca).

Cardinal, H. (1969). *The unjust society.* Edmonton, AB: M.G. Hurtig Ltd., Publishers.

Clark, J. A. (1995). *Ethical and political issues in qualitative research from a philosophical point of view.* (American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, ED 390 923).

Cove, J. J. (1995). *What the bones say: Tasmanian aborigines, science and domination.* Ottawa, ON: Carlton University Press.

Cummins, B. (1985). Indian control of Indian education: A Burkian interpretation. *Canadian journal of native education.* Vol. 12, No. 3.

Dahl, R. (1984). *Modern political analysis* (4th Edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Government of Alberta. *Terms and definitions.* Edmonton, AB: Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Department of Education. Government of Alberta. (1995). *School council resource manual.* Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1876). *Treaty no. 6.* (IAND Publication No. QS-0574-000-EE-A-1). Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1877). *Treaty no. 7.* (IAND Publication No. QS-0574-000-EE-A-1). Ottawa, On: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1899). *Treaty no. 8.* (IAND Publication No. QS-0576-000-EE-A-16). Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1991). *Information sheet no. 5.* (IAND Publication No. QS-6047-005-EE-A3). Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1993). *Indian act alternatives.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1993). *Background paper for the royal commission on Aboriginal peoples.* Ottawa, On: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1994). *Inherent right to self-government Aboriginal peoples' commission.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *The outlook on priorities and expenditures 1995-1996 to 1997-1998.* (IAND Publication No. QS-6095-000-BB-A1). Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *Information sheet no. 15.* (IAND Publication No. QS-6047-015-EE-A6). Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *Creating opportunity: Progress on commitments to Aboriginal peoples.* (IAND Publication No. QS-6097-000-BB-A1). Ottawa, On: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *Aboriginal self-government.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *Pride in partnership alberta.* (IAND Publication No. QS-6097-007-BB-A1). Ottawa, On: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1995). *Basic department data.* (IAND Publication No. QS-3556-010-EE-A1). Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works And Government Services Canada.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1996). *Information about inac.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1996). *Federal government transfers: Cultural/educational centres to First Nations control.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1996). *Unique education agreement-in-principle signed.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1996). *Fort Frances chiefs sign framework agreement on education jurisdiction.* (http://www.inac.gc.ca).

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Alberta region. (1996). *First Nations in Alberta.* (IAND Publication No. QS-A011-000-EE-A1). Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Department of Justice (1989). *A consolidation of the constitution acts 1867 to 1982.* (Catalogue No. YX-1/1989). Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre.

Dobbert, M. L. (1982). *Ethnographic research.* New York, NY: Praeger Publisher.

Dowding, Keith. (1996). *Power.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Ellen, R. F. (1984). *Ethnographic research: A guide to general conduct.* London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Federal-Provincial Meeting of Ministers On Aboriginal Constitutional Affairs, Canada. (1986). *Proposed 1985 Accord Relating To The Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.* Ottawa, ON.

Fleras, Augie & Elliot, Jean Leonard. (1992). *The nations within.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Glesne, C. & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Goddard, J. Tim. (1996). *Reversing the spiral of delegitimation.* Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Society for Socialist Studies. St. Catharines, ON.

Goddard, J. Tim. (1993). Band controlled schools: considerations for the future. *Canadian journal of native education.* 20 (1) pp.163- 167.

Government of Alberta. (1995). *An Understanding on First Nations - Canada Relations between The Chiefs of the First Nations of Treaties 6, 7 & 8 (Alberta) and The Government of Alberta.*

Government of Alberta. (1993). *Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations.* News Release. February 10, 1993.

Government of Alberta. (1993). *Memorandum of Agreement between The Grand Council of Treaty 8 First Nations and The Government of Alberta.*

Government of Alberta. (1987). *Native Education in Alberta's Schools.* Edmonton, AB: Queen's Printer for Alberta.

Government of Alberta. (1995). *Native Education Project.* Minister of the Department of Education. Edmonton, AB: Queen's Printer for Alberta.

Government of Alberta. (1983). *Northland School Division Act.* Edmonton, AB: Queen's Printer for Alberta.

Government of Alberta. (1997). *School act.* Edmonton, AB: Queen's Printer for Alberta.

Government of Canada. (1997). *Aboriginal Self-Government.* Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. QS-6119-005-EE-A1.

Government of Canada. (1997). *The Budget of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.* Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. QS-6119-009-EE-A1.

Government of Canada. (1985). *Indian Act.* Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Government of Canada. (1995). *An Understanding on First Nations - Canada Relations between The Chiefs of the First Nations of Treaties 6, 7 & 8 (Alberta) and The Government of Canada.*

Government of Canada. (1995). *Sub-Agreement on Education between The Chiefs of the First Nations of Treaties 6, 7 & 8 (Alberta) and The Government of Canada.*

Government of Canada. (1995). *Creating Opportunity: Progress on Commitments to Aboriginal Peoples.* Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. QS-6097-000-BB-A2. Ottawa, ON. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Government of Canada. (1995). *Federal Policy Guide: Aboriginal Self-Government, The Government of Canada's Approach to Implementation*

of the Inherent Right and the Negotiation of Aboriginal Self-Government. Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. QS-5324-000-BB-A1. Ottawa, ON. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Government of Canada. (1997). *Definitions.* Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. QS-6119-001-EE-A1.

Government of Canada. (1981). *Treaty no. 10.* Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Cat. No. R33-10/1981F.

Government of Canada. (1985). *Indian act. office consolidation.* Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Cat. No. YX75-1-6-1985.

Government of Canada. (1993). *Integrated research plan, royal commission of Aboriginal peoples.*

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Hall, D. R. (1992). FED-BOS: the federally controlled band operated school and the no-policy policy. *Canadian journal of native education.* 19 (1) pp. 57-66.

Hampton, E. (1993). Toward a redefining of American Indian/Alaskan native education. *Canadian journal of native education.* 20 (2) pp. 261-310.

Hanson, E. M. (1991). *Educational administration and organizational behavior.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Hawley, D.L. (1990). *The annotated 1990 Indian act.* Toronto, ON: Carswell Legal Publications.

Henderson, B. (1996). *The Indian act, R.S.C. 1985, c. I-5 (Annotated)* [On-line]. (http://www.bloorstreet/200Block).

House of Commons Canada. (1983). *Indian self-government in canada.* Ottawa ON: Queen's Printer Canada.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (1982). *Educational administration: Theory, research and practice* (2nd ed.). New York: Random House.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (1996). *Educational administration: Theory, research and practice* (5th Edition). New York: Random House.

Hylton, J. H. (1994). *Aboriginal self-government in canada: Current trends and issues.* Saskatoon: Purich Publication.

Isaac, T. & Maloughney, M. S. (1992). Dually disadvantaged and historically forgotten?: Aboriginal women and the inherent right of self-government. *Manitoba Law Journal.* 21(1) pp. 453-475.

Knorr-Cetina, K.D. (1981). *The manufacture of knowledge: An essay on the constructivist and contextual nature of science.* New York: Pergamon.

Liberal Party of Canada. (1993). *Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada.* Ottawa, ON.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1987). *Ethics: The failure of positivist science.* (American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC).

Littlechild, B. (1995). *Management frameworks of Alberta band controlled school systems: Governance, organizational, & financial structures.* Unpublished Master's Project, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

McDonald, N. (1996). *The Mcdonald summary of Aboriginal issues today (4th ed.).* Winnipeg: Cross Cultural Communications International.

McIvor, S. (1991). *Sharing power: How can First Nations government work?* In F. Cassidy (Ed.), *Aboriginal Self-Determination.* Lantzville, BC: Oolichan Books.

Mechanic,David. (1962). Sources of power of lower participants in complex organizations. *Administrative science quarterly.* 7, pp. 349-364.

Mertl, S. & Ward, J. (1985). *Keegstra: The issues, the trial, the consequences.* Saskatoon, Sask: Western Producers Prairie Books.

Ministry of Education, Skills and Training. Aboriginal Education Branch. Government of British Columbia. (1996). *Integrating BC First Nation studies: A K-10 guide for teachers.*

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organization.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Nanus, B. (1992). *Visionary leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

National Indian Brotherhood. (1972). *Indian control of Indian education.* Ottawa, ON: National Indian Brotherhood.

National Indian Brotherhood Assembly of First Nations. (1985). *The Case for Indian Self-Government.* Document No. 840-393/016.

National Indian Brotherhood. Assembly of First Nations. (1988). *Tradition and education: Toward a vision of our future.* Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

National Indian Brotherhood. Assembly of First Nations. (1990). *Statement at meeting of ministers.* Ottawa, ON: National Indian Brotherhood.

Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Padak, N. & Padak, G. (1994). *Guidelines for planning action research projects.* (Ohio Literacy Resource Center, Kent State University, ED 380 699).

Pauls, S. (1996). *Examination of relationships between First Nations controlled schools and departments of education in Alberta,Saskatchewan and Manitoba.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Pfeffer, J. (1992). *Managing with power: Politics and influence in organizations.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Posey, D. A. & Dutfield, G. (1996). *Beyond intellectual property: Toward traditional resource rights for indigenous peoples and local communities.* Ottawa, ON: International Development Research Centre.

Punch, M. (1986). *The politics and ethics of fieldwork.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996a). *Looking forward, looking back.* (Vol.1). Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa, ON: Canada Communication Group.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996b). *Restructuring the relationship.* (Vol. 2, Part 1). Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa, ON: Canada Communication Group.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996c). *Restructuring the relationship.* (Vol. 2, Part 2). Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa,ON: Canada Communication Group.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996d). *Gathering strength.* (Vol. 3). Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa,ON: Canada Communication Group.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996e). *Perspectives and realities.* (Vol. 4). Minister of Supply and Services. Ottawa, ON: Canada Communication Group.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996f). *Renewal: A twenty year commitment.* (Vol. 5). Minister of Supply and Services. Ottawa, ON: Canada Communication Group.

Ross, R. A. (1992). *Dancing with ghosts: Exploring Indian reality.* Markham, ON: Octopus Publishing Group.

Rudestam, K. E. & Newton, R. R. (1992). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Salancik, Gerald R. and Pfeffer, Jeffrey. (1977). Who gets power-and how they hold on to it: A strategic-contingency model of power. *Organizational dynamics.* 6, pp. 3-21.

Schmookler, A. B. (1984). *The parable of the tribes.* Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Schwandt, T. A. (1994). *Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry.* In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Siksika Nation, Alberta. (1994). *Treaty based self-government: Rebuilding the Siksika nation.* Siksika Nation, Alberta.

Steier, F. (1991). *Research and reflexivity.* London: Sage.

Stevenson,W., Johnson, R., & Greschner, D. 1993. Peekiskwetan. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law.* 6(1) pp. 153-173.

Taylor, D. M., Crago, M. B., & McAlpine, L. (1993). Education in Aboriginal Communities: Dilemmas around Empowerment. *Canadian journal of native education.* 20 (1) pp.176-183.

Tierney, W. G. (1993). *Building communities of difference: Higher education in the twenty-first century.* Toronto, ON: OISE Press.

Tri-Council Working Group. (1996). *Code of conduct for research involving humans.* Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Urion, C. (1992). Big pictures and paradoxes. *Canadian journal of native education.* 19 (1) pp. 1-6.

Wellins, R. S., Byham, W. C., & Wilson, J. M. (1991). *Empowered teams.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wildcat, B. (1995). *Successful leaders of First Nations schools in Alberta.* Unpublished Master's Project, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Wirt, F. M., & Kirst, M. W. (1992). *The politics of education: Schools in conflict* (3rd Edition). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

APPENDIX A

Interview Schedule

1. What, in your opinion, is the primary issues that needs to be resolved in Aboriginal education?

(b) What, in your opinion, are some of the other issues that need to be resolved?

2. Should the Federal government play an enhanced or reduced role in Aboriginal education? In what ways?
3. Are there presently any communication channels in place which allow for a sharing of resources between First Nation controlled schools?

(b) What communication channels could be put in place?

4. Do First Nation communities wish to continue a working relationship with the Federal Government in the area of education?

(b) If yes, in what ways?

5. What kinds of support are provided by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND)?
6. What educational supports are necessary in order to secure First Nation control?
7. What is the nature of the support provided by DIAND when a decision is arrived at to assume Band control?
8. Are these supports sufficient to ensure your success?
9. What role could Alberta Education play in resolving issues in Aboriginal education ?

-should the provincial government be involved in the operation of First Nation schools?

-what services/resources provided by Alberta Education would be of a benefit to First Nation schools/education authorities?

-have you ever requested access to educational services/resources provided by Alberta Education? Yes- response?

No- why not?

10. What resources/services provided by provincial educational systems would benefit the delivery of educational services to children under your responsibility?

-what aspects of the provincial system would not be of benefit? Why?

11. From a First Nation's community perspective what would be the benefit of a provincial educational partnership?
12. What would be your expectations of a First Nation/ Provincial educational partnership?
13. As a First Nation educator/politician how would you visualize this partnership?
14. Is there a concern that a partnership of this type would erode or interfere with Federal responsibilities?

(b) If yes, in what ways?

(c) If no, why not?

15. Is there room for Federal government involvement in a partnership?

(b) If yes, what role could they play?

(c) If no, why not?

16. Is the province presently addressing the needs of First Nation children attending provincial schools?

(b) If no, what changes are required?

(c) Are the tuition agreements that have been entered into addressing the needs of students attending provincial schools? Why or why not?

17. Would you prefer negotiating a tuition agreement with the individual jurisdiction or directly with the provincial educational authority?

(b) Why?

18. Is there room for other provincial educational institutions in a partnership; for example: the Alberta Teachers' Association, and/or the Alberta School Boards' Association?

(b) If yes, what role do you see them playing in a partnership?

(c) If no, why not?

19. If a partnership model were to be developed who should take the initiative to initiate the process?

20. I will be doing a section in this study titled participant profiles. Would you please tell me about yourself and provide me with background information that will assist me with your profile?

APPENDIX B

Abbreviations

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	DIAND
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	INAC
Assembly of First Nations	AFN
National Indian Brotherhood	NIB
The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples	RCAP
Alternate Funding Arrangement	AFA
Comprehensive Funding Arrangement	CFA
Flexible Funding Arrangement	FFA
The Alberta Teachers' Association	ATA
Alberta School Boards Association	ASBA
Canadian Association of University Teachers	CAUT
Local School Board Committee	LSBC
Northland School Division No. 61	NSD
College of Alberta School Superintendents	CASS